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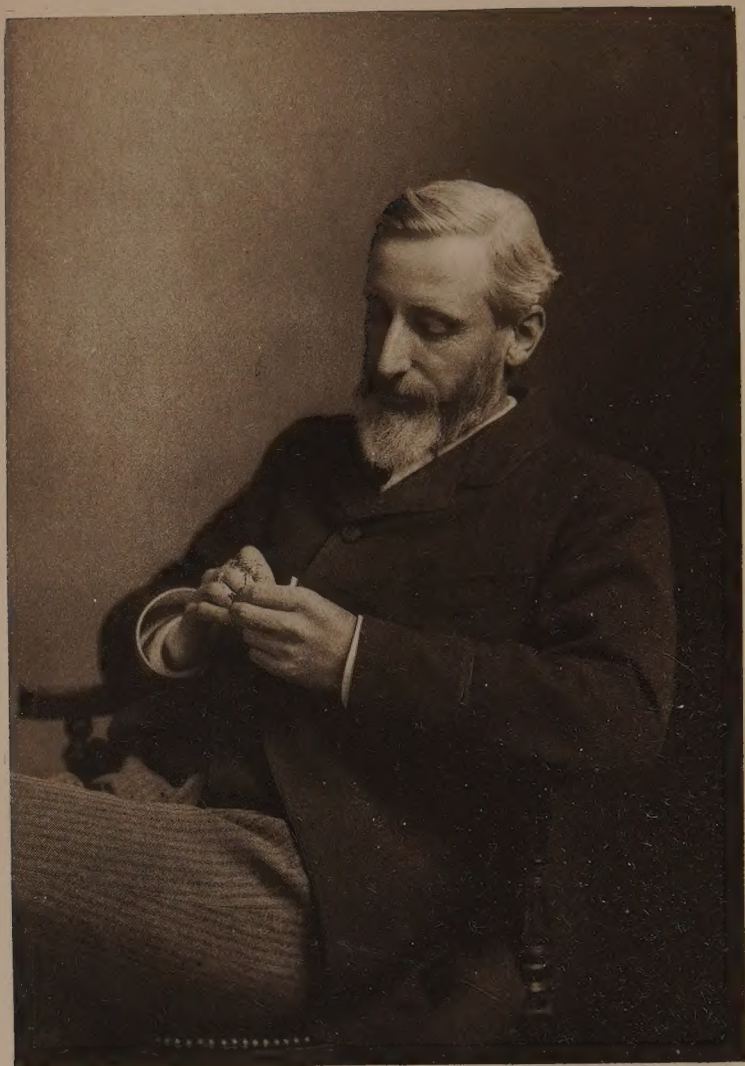
GRANT ALLEN

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*' Nature I loved, and next to Nature, Art;  
I warmed both hands before the fire of life,  
It sinks, and I am ready to depart.'*







*Sutton Electric Engraving Co.*

*Opunt Allen.*

# GRANT ALLEN

A Memoir

BY EDWARD CLODD

WITH A BIBLIOGRAPHY

‘He spake of trees from the cedar tree  
that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop  
that springeth out of the wall: he spake  
also of beasts and of fowl and of creep-  
ing things and of fishes.’—1 Kings iv. 33.

LONDON

GRANT RICHARDS

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*Journal of Management Studies*, 19(6), 701-718.

I don't know that any phrase or quotation has ever been  
of much use to me in life. but the two passages most frequently  
on my lips are probably these -

"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole  
world and lose his own soul?"

"To live by law,

Acting the law - we live by without fear;

And, because right is right, to follow right

Were we down in the ~~sworn~~ <sup>sworn</sup> of consequence

(Tennyson. *Enone*)

Grant Allen



## MEMOIR

'I am in harmony with all that is a part of thy harmony, great Universe. For me nothing is early and nothing late that is in season for thee. All is fruit for me which thy seasons bear, O Nature! From thee, in thee, and unto thee are all things. "Dear City of Cecrops!" saith the poet; and wilt not thou say, "Dear City of God."'

MARCUS AURELIUS (iv. 23).

'For love we earth then serve we all;  
Her mystic secret then is ours.'

GEORGE MEREDITH:

'The Thrush in February.'

CHARLES GRANT BLAIRFINDIE  
ALLEN was born at Alwington, near Kingston, Canada, on the 24th February 1848. His father, J. Antisell Allen, sometime scholar of Trinity College, Dublin, was the son of Jonathan Allen of Killaloe, County Clare, an Irish barrister of some repute, who married his cousin, a daughter of Joseph Antisell of Arborhill, Tipperary. On taking holy orders, Mr. Antisell Allen settled for

a time in London, and left for Canada in 1840, where his first charge was at Christieville, in the Province of Quebec. He finally became incumbent of Holy Trinity Church on Wolfe Island, Lake Ontario, in 1848. This followed on his marriage with Charlotte Catherine Ann Grant, only daughter of Charles William, fifth Baron de Longueüil, to whose memory, on his death in 1848, his widow had caused that church to be erected.

The title of Baron de Longueüil was bestowed by Louis XIV. in 1700 upon one Charles le Moyne de Longueüil for distinguished services in camp and court in Canada. Francis Parkman, the eminent historian of the French in the New World, speaks of le Moyne as 'founder of a family, the most truly eminent in Canada.' The succession of the Grants to the title came through the marriage of Marie Charles Joseph, Baroness de Longueüil in her own right, with Captain David Alexander Grant



of Blairfindie, whose ancestors had fled to Canada after the battle of Culloden in 1746. The eldest son, Charles William, fifth Baron de Longueüil, married Caroline, daughter of General Coffin of Nova Scotia, in 1781, and had as issue Charles Irwin, the sixth Baron, and Charlotte, mother of Grant Allen.

One of Grant Allen's sisters, Mrs. Maud Fergusson, says in a letter to me, 'There was much protesting blood in us.' General Coffin, the father of three sons, one of whom became a general, and the other two admirals, sacrificed his property on his refusal to submit to American rule after the War of Independence, and in Jacobite times the Grants of Blairfindie were 'agin the Government.' My friend, Mr. J. M. Bulloch, has furnished me with some particulars concerning that family, and makes reference to Colonel Allardyce's 'Historical Papers of the Jacobite Period' (printed by the New Spalding Club, 1895), in which

occurs mention of the adhesion of the Grants to the Stuart cause. In the list of heritors who in the latter part of October 1699 (exactly two hundred years before Grant Allen's death) gave bonds 'for their peaceable behaviour,' the name 'John Grant of Blairfindie and his men' is included. But their descendants were 'out in the '45,' and, after Culloden, four sons of the laird of Blairfindie, whose house was burnt by the Crown, escaped the axe by flight, probably by way of France, to America. Yet the Government had 'scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it,' since in a Report on the Highlands sent by one Lieutenant Ogilvy to Henry Fox in 1750, mention is made of 'John Grant, brother to Blairfindie in Glenlivett,' as 'listing men for the French service.' The Lieutenant adds: 'I shall do my best endeavour to get proof against him so that I may apprehend him.'

It is pretty certain that David Alexander Grant was descended from one of the

American refugees. That some of the fugitives remained on the Continent is proved by letters from an Abbé, Peter Grant of Rome, in 1760-1765, to his relatives, which are quoted in Sir William Fraser's privately printed 'History of the Grants.' The Abbé had a 'nephew' who called himself Baron de Blairfindie, and who was Colonel of the Legion Royale of France in 1774.

To the majority of readers, genealogies are as dry as logarithms. But, in these days, when the doctrine of heredity is in the air, the clues to a man's physical and mental constitution are sought for in his ancestry and surroundings. Irish on the father's side, and Scotch, with admixture of French, on the mother's side, showing in his features a striking resemblance to the de Longueuil type, Grant Allen was well-nigh as pure-blooded a Celt as, in the subtle blending of European races, is possible. Therein is the key to his wonderful versatility, alertness, and power of easy,

rapid passage from one subject to another, qualities, perilous enough, if unchecked, but which in him were, happily, usually controlled by the scientific spirit. But, as Mr. Clement Shorter remarks in an incisive article in the 'Bookman,' December 1899, 'it should not be necessary to emphasise the Celtic element in Grant Allen, because he was always insisting upon it himself, and because he did more than any one else to popularise the theory of the Celtic element in literature first propounded by Renan and Matthew Arnold.' The spirit of inquiry which made every field of observation fruitful to himself and to his fellows was inherited from his father, himself a lover of living things, and still, in his now advanced age, an eager student of their works and ways. Thence came, likewise, the spirit of gentleness and of sympathy, which, in the father, explains his revolt against the damnatory clauses of the Athanasian Creed, the reading of which,

being then compulsory, involved his resignation of the incumbency of Holy Trinity. That was in 1852. Mrs. Fergusson suggests that Grant Allen 'inherited his artistic sense' (by which is probably meant his sense of harmony and colour, for he could not draw), 'from his mother,' who is described as 'a woman of great strength and nobility of character, of wide and cultivated mind, honourable and generous, and possessed of great business capacity,' the 'complex parentage explaining his many-sidedness.' Emerson says, 'Whoso would be a man must be a Nonconformist,' and rebel and heretic are one in temperament, because each is opposed to the existing order of things; and the Jacobite, the loyalist, and the broad-minded theologian who 'blent their blood' produced in Allen a man whose life-note was revolt. As he sung in one of his finest poems—

'If systems that be are the order of God,  
Revolt is a part of the order.'

In many respects his boyhood was enviable. It was spent amidst scenes giving full, free play to that love of Nature which was to have brilliant and accurate expression in groups of charming essays. Parts of Wolfe Island and of Howe Island belonged to his family, and there, amongst these and other of the 'Thousand Isles,' he found happy hunting-ground for flower, and bird, and insect. 'Something of the glamour of childhood,' he says, 'surrounds the region still in my eyes; sweeter flowers blow there than anywhere else on this prosaic planet; bigger fish lurk among the crevices; bluer birds flit between the honeysuckle; and livelier squirrels gambol upon the hickory trees than in any other cases of this oblate spheroid. I see the orange lilies and the ladies' slippers still by the reflected light of ten-year-old memories.' Mrs. Fergusson records her impressions of 'a kind, delicate, thoughtful, elder brother, extremely gentle towards all living crea-



tures, and showing quite early an intense interest in all plants and animals. I remember that he used to set me to watch birds for him when he was, I suppose, at his lessons, and my pride if I could find the first "hepatica" or "sanguinaria" for him (plants corresponding with the snowdrop and violet as harbingers of a Canadian spring). I can still remember how delightful it was to be told by him of the habits and nests of the golden oriole, the humming birds, and about the great green moths and curious stick insects.' Never, as his sister's remarks imply, robust enough to enter into the rough games of boyhood, he cultivated no physical exercises, save that of skating—a necessity in the long Canadian winter, whose dreariness and monotony of whiteness chilled his bones. Outside his rambles, fishing appears to have been his sole diversion, a plea in its favour being, as he said to one of his sisters, that it 'gave him time to think.'

Until the family left Canada, the father was tutor to his sons. He tells me that 'Grant began Greek six weeks before he was seven years of age. He commenced writing a book, as he called it, at the same age. His mother saw him one day very busy at his little table; and on her asking him what he was doing, he said, "Oh, mother, I am writing a book on 'War or Peace; which shall it be?'" and this is the chapter on Peace." As a very little child, he would ask the most thoughtful questions, making me wonder what was passing through his mind.'

If his boyhood was enviable, so was his school life and training, since it ministered to a temperament which was cosmopolitan. Pride of descent, and, more than that, hatred of oppression, go far to explain his Celtic sympathies, but the world was his country. Of patriotism, which, in righteous spleen against the abuses sheltered under the name, Dr. Johnson



defined as 'the last refuge of a scoundrel,' Grant Allen speaks as 'one of those lowest vices which most often masquerade in false garb as a virtue.' Of course, he had in his mind that spurious, aggressive form whose motto is 'my country, right or wrong;' but the explanation of his frequent disclaimer of patriotism in any form is to be sought in his colonial birth, his mixed descent, and his education in America, France, and England, all inimical to the fostering of national sentiment, and to the love of any fatherland. And that had the inevitable result of keeping him out of touch with those inherent tendencies in the mass of men to which the persistence of race-feeling is due.

When he was thirteen years old, the family removed to Newhaven, Conn., where he and an elder brother, who predeceased him, were placed under the care of a tutor from the neighbouring College of Yale. The next move, 'for the education

of the children,' as his father tells me, was in 1862 across the seas to France, where he was sent to school at the College Impériale, Dieppe. Then, about a year before his parents' return to Canada, he was transferred to King Edward's School, Birmingham. His progress and promise justified an effort on the part of his family to give him a university training, and in Michaelmas term, 1867, he matriculated at Merton College, Oxford. There he won the Senior Classical Postmastership (the technical term for Scholar at Merton), which was tenable for five years, and carried with it a stipend of £80 per annum. In the teeth of many difficulties, as will be seen presently, he gained a first class in Mods. in Trinity Term 1869, and a second class in Greats in Trinity Term 1870, returning for a day or two in 1871 to take his B.A., when he removed his name from the College books. So far as the intellectual inheritance into which he entered

goes, he was happy in the time of his arrival. The current of ideas gave impetus to thoughts and speculations which were carrying him in the same direction. Between the issue of Herbert Spencer's 'Principles of Psychology' (1855) and 'Principles of Biology' (1864), there had appeared Darwin's 'Origin of Species' (1859) and Huxley's 'Man's Place in Nature' (1863). In 1860 the 'home of lost causes,' as Matthew Arnold calls his beloved Oxford (Preface to 'Essays in Criticism'), had witnessed another defeat, when Huxley opposed the fact of the common descent of man and ape to the rhetorical fictions of Bishop Wilberforce. Although the agitation had died away, it left a wholly changed atmosphere in which the freest thought could breathe. And the enthusiasts of that time, to whom the doctrine of Evolution appealed as a philosophy including man, 'body, soul, and spirit,' within the laws of unbroken causation, had some warrant for

belief in the triumph of a faith to which, a generation later, the recrudescence of superstition has, in the swing of the human pendulum, given a temporary check. Philosophy and Science, which Allen treated as one, were his first loves; and throughout his life, however much compelled to consort with a more frivolous mistress, he made her, more often than not, the servant of her rivals. His attitude, as will be shown presently in the interesting reminiscences contributed by his friend Professor York Powell, was then one of unqualified adhesion to the faith as it is in Herbert Spencer. And with some modifications hardly affecting the fundamentals of that faith, his attitude remained unchanged to the end. Of course, appreciation of the writings of Spencer, Darwin, and other authorities came the more readily to a youth who brought to the study of them a number of facts which he had collected since the days when he roamed about the 'Thousand Isles,' facts

whose significance those writings revealed. And, moreover, having, from his earliest boyhood dismissed, if he ever held it, all belief in the supernatural, his was no sudden conversion, but the orderly development of a mind attuned to the new evangel. Twenty years after leaving Oxford, he gives this as the conclusion of the whole matter of the 'Gospel according to Herbert Spencer': 'Know yourself, and your own place in the universe about you. Fear no phantoms, but face realities. Understand your own Body, and the light cast upon it by the analogy of other bodies. Understand your own Mind, and the light cast upon it by the history and evolution of other minds. Understand the phenomena, organic or inorganic, physical or psychical, by which you are surrounded, and the laws to which they severally conform. Understand the Society of which you are a member, and learn from like analogies the origin and functions of its various parts. So, in your

capacity as an individual, will you govern your own path through the world aright; so, in your capacity as parent, will you produce and bring up better units for the composition of the Society in future; so, in your capacity as citizen, will you help to mould the State, of which you are a part, to ultimate conformity with Truth and Justice. In contradistinction to all the preachers of Faith—that is to say, of contented and uncritical Ignorance—Mr. Spencer stands forth as the preacher of Knowledge. And though his own contributions to it are endless—for he is a born generaliser, and even his conversation consists mainly of generalisations—yet his one greatest addition to the world's stock may aptly be summed up in the phrase he himself prefixes to the published list of his works, "The Doctrine of Evolution." He alone has taught us the orderly development of the cosmos as a whole, and of every one of its component parts, in accordance



with a single universal law of synthetic development.'

Life had been smooth sailing for Allen up to the time of his settlement at Oxford. Soon after this, changes in family circumstances threw him on his own efforts, since resources, outside the Postmastership, he had none. So he earned a little money, in the usual fashion, by coaching. With more chivalry than prudence, he had given hostages to fortune by an early marriage, which, if it called forth his devotion, and brought out his noblest qualities, crippled his energies, and made life a terrible struggle. For, very soon after the marriage, his wife was stricken with paralysis, rendering her totally helpless for two years, when the end came. Whether from the standpoint of health or economy, Oxford was no place for a poor man with an invalid companion, and hence Allen flitted, as circumstances demanded or allowed, from place to place, now living in

London, now at the seaside, going up to Oxford only within the limits of residence necessary for securing his degree. In a letter written on New Year's Day 1870 to Mr. E. B. W. Nicholson, now Bodley's Librarian, he says:—

Waterloo House, Victoria Street, Ventnor.

. . . My coming up to Oxford next term is not more doubtful than usual; that is to say, the betting is not more than 10 to 1 against it. When a man has no money, and can't make any anyhow, he finds it difficult to make up any very definite plan for the future. If I can find money to pay my railway fare, I always go up; if not, I borrow a penny stamp and write for a grace-term. I am reading for next May. I shall not put off one day beyond my first chance. So that I have only five months to read for Greats. But I will have my shot then or never. I am much too poor a man to waste any more time on an unproductive place like Oxford. If you are resolved, I am ten times more so. All I want is a degree. I go in for no fellowship. As soon as I get the two letters, and as good a class as I can manage, I shall get an easy mastership, where there is lots of work and very poor pay, and subside into obscurity. . . . You will doubtless by this time have discovered that I am in a bad humour this evening. I have been reading Livy all evening; and as I have only the Oxford text and no dictionary, I have scarcely done anything. I have to get



through five books in a fortnight, so I am rather riled.—

Yours Davidically, Jonathanically, and Pythiadamonicallly,

GRANT ALLEN.

(Note.—Mr. Franklin Richards tells me that Allen did try for a fellowship in 1872.)

Allen's first known appearance in print was in the pages of the 'Oxford University Magazine and Review,' of which only two numbers, December 1869 and January 1870, were published. Mr. Franklin Richards and Mr. Nicholson were joint editors of the first number, to which Allen contributed a dainty little poem entitled 'Two Portraits,' reprinted in 'The Lower Slopes' under the title 'Forecast and Fulfilment.' For the second number he and Mr. Nicholson were responsible, and additional interest attaches itself to the contents, as evidencing Allen's bent and versatility. He contributed an article on 'The Positive Aspect of Communism'; a poem entitled 'In Bushy Park' (reprinted in 'The Lower Slopes'); and a short story, 'Mr. Josiah P. Doolittle's

Electioneering Experiences,' which, in sprightly style, tells how Josiah P. Doolittle, of Hitchcocksbury University, U.S.A., outwitted a corrupt election committee. The 'Radical of the Period,' as Allen styles himself in a letter to Mr. Nicholson, wherein he regrets that he can spare no more time for the magazine, justifies his title in the article on Communism. But it has touches of the 'Philosophical Radical' in the better sense of the recognition of evolution in politics. A sentence or two bearing on this may be quoted:—

'Communism does not imply the cessation of progress, just as it does not either imply the absolute perfection of government. It might be so if any purely theoretical scheme of politics could be successfully carried out into practice; but, as in real life we have to deal with constantly varying physical and moral conditions, it is absurd to suppose we shall ever reach a state of perfection beyond which it will be impossible to devise any improvement. Communism will have its defects and its checks; it will find its reformers and its conservatives; it will never seem to have been fully realised till after it has been replaced by some still

more perfect system, invented to remedy evils of which we can now have no conception. It will be complete only when it has ceased to exist.'

Passing by the poem—one of many written at this time, and confided to the care of Mr. Franklin Richards, or circulated in manuscript—interest centres in the story, as showing Allen's early predilection for narrative as vehicle for his views. In many of his scientific papers he slides into the familiar and the personal; trembling, as it were, on the edge of the dramatic presentment of things, as in Hood's most serious verse we hear the jingle which, unchecked by the theme, would rattle with a pun. Hence it would seem that Allen was driven into fiction much as a duck is driven into water.

He was never a member of the Union, which involved a certain detachment from some men of his years; but there was no lack of arenas of talks and debates 'de omnibus rebus' in the rooms of College friends,

notably those of Mr. Franklin Richards, where he met Mr. Nicholson, and also of Mr. Bromley, where he met Mr. York Powell, now Regius Professor of Modern History in the University of Oxford, who, to the great advantage of this memoir, has been good enough at my request to send the following :—

‘My dear Clodd,—Here are some scraps that linger in my memory touching G. A. The first time I met him was in Bromley’s rooms in 1869 I believe. He was, of course, wholly unlike the average British undergraduate, and it was his pleasure to accentuate the differences with a kind of defiance, quiet but real, of the conventions that the Philistine worships. He was never afraid of being himself ; he was not ashamed to seem grotesque if he chose. This was almost incredible originality in the undergraduate of the seventies and sixties. Of course, he talked openly, but we all did

that, and confidently, as most of us did, upon the many questions that interested us—theologic, philosophic, social, political. He was of the most “advanced” type of the sixties, and I think he was that to the end. The bent of his mind was logical, orderly, accepting only the appeal to reason, but at the same time caring (too much, as I thought) for completeness of “system.” At first he struck one a little unpleasantly perhaps, for he would never allow a man to think he agreed with him if he didn’t, and so he used to state his own position very sharply and irrevocably; but one soon got to see through the confident doctrinaire the kindly, gentle, generous, and sympathetic friend and comrade, who could differ without bitterness, and would treat any honest and unselfish belief he did not hold himself as wrong certainly, but never as discreditable to the holder’s heart, though he must often have considered our crude theories as damaging to any trust

in the soundness of our heads. I remember he was interested in my raw joy in Büchner, the fashionable, popular materialist of the day, and once or twice we discussed Comte; but we neither of us gave him the position that the preceding generation had allowed him, and when a man could read Darwin and Spencer we both felt there was no further need for such as him. When Allen got hold of Spencer I don't know exactly, I think as early at least as '69, but he was a whole-souled disciple. He had naturally a bent toward dogmatic, and he welcomed the comprehensive system that at once satisfied his scientific bent, his love of logical order, and his desire for completeness of theory. I remember many arguments over Spencer both in the seventies and later. When Richard Shute, my philosopher friend, got to know Allen, they often argued grandly, Shute taking the extreme sceptical position and attacking wittily and vigorously, and Allen defend-

ing the whole Spencerian stronghold with boundless ingenuity and tireless perseverance, the rest of us putting in a query or a word or two of encouragement or deprecation whenever we got a chance. I remember, too, solitary walks and talks with Allen, especially about the river below Oxford, and above it in the fields by Godstow, after he had taken his degree. He was a great lover of the quiet, soft, meadowy landscape of the Thames valley, and he often used to refer to a stray remark of mine, made one superb summer afternoon at Iffley, that I doubted after all "whether the Tropics were more lovely," and would say that his tropical experiences had decided him that they were not. He had a keen eye for the character and "make" of landscape, but he could never draw a line, and I don't remember him ever attending to any but "local colour" in the scenery. I think he saw nature as a naturalist rather than as a painter.



‘I remember being presented to his first wife—a gentle, quiet, soft-speaking woman, in poor health even then in the early days of their wedded life—and noticing the tenderness and care with which he anticipated her wishes, and spared her all fatigue or trouble, while it was delightful to see how she appreciated in her silent, grateful way his affectionate attention and guardianship.

‘The last scene of the early pre-Jamaican days of Allen at Oxford was a jolly oyster-lunch that he gave at the Mitre. There were a lot of men there, for he made it a kind of farewell feast to all his Oxford friends. Esme Gordon, the lad he had been “coaching” for a time, was there, and there was a strange mixture of riding, reading, and rowing men, all for the hour united happily in Allen’s glad hospitality. Every one was struck with the originality and success of this innovation of an oyster-lunch at Oxford, but I don’t remember it being imitated. Oxford undergraduate and



bachelor life is excessively governed by routine, and shuns even new forms of feasting unless they are regarded as required by fashion.

‘After his second most fortunate marriage and long stay in Jamaica we used often to meet, and I found him a far happier man than I had ever known him before, but as kindly, as keen, as clear-headed, and as enthusiastic and zealous for reforms in ethic and politic as ever. He had learned a lot in the Tropics; he had thought out a valuable thesis on colour-sense; he was on the way to several discoveries in botany; he was full of energetic plans for the future. His conversation was as delightful as ever, more full of instances, widened by experience, but still steadfast to orthodox Spencerism, and definitely radical. In his accent, his attitude, his looks, his judicious parcelling of his time, his wise care for the future, his humane and ceaseless care for others, his pleasure in talking

and walking, his love for Swinburne's "Poems and Ballads," and his reverence for Spencer and Darwin, he was still essentially the same man I had parted from early in the seventies with so much regret when he left England for Jamaica, and the same he remained in all essentials to the last. I learned a lot from him always. The phlegmatic dulness and self-satisfaction of the "average Englishman," who hates to think at all save when at business on business matters, and in everything else gives full swing to prejudice and custom, refusing to believe that any "foreigner" can ever (save perhaps in the matter of sauces, or piano-playing, or sculpture) teach him anything—the vulgar dulness of such an one exasperated his clear Gallic mind, and he would gibe and mock at the shams we English profess to believe in and are pleased to occasionally do public homage to (especially in our "cant newspaper phrases") in a most amusing and effective way of his own. He

was determined whenever he had the opportunity to speak out and plainly attack the tyrannous and stupid conventionalities that are allowed to do their worst to choke healthy life in England. And it is a satisfaction to me to know that he had his knife deep into many of them before he died. His kindness was delicate and unfailing, and I and mine have often experienced it; he was really pleased to do a friend a service, and he could spend time and take trouble in such a case ungrudgingly.

‘When Grant Allen died I had known him for thirty years without a shade of difference ever arising between us, and certainly he was one of the best and truest friends a man could have—generous, fair-minded, and unforgetful of the old comradeship; so that though he was always able down to the last to make new friends, I do not think he ever lost one of his old friends, save those whom death too soon removed. I do not see how such a straightforward, sym-

pathetic, enthusiastic nature as Allen's can have passed through the world without influencing those he came in contact with very definitely for the better. His patience, affection, and practical wisdom in facing the inevitable with a brave politeness, made one ashamed of one's own lesser troubles, and helped one to meet the difficulties in one's own path. Few men I have known well have cared more for the essentials than Grant Allen. Truth, Justice, Pity, Love, Gratitude, and Sympathy were to him throughout his life real things to be upheld at all hazards. His Faith was always great; his Hope was continually and wonderfully sustained; his Charity was invincible.

'I must leave other people to speak about his fiction and his study of the natural sciences. The first I could not, save in the short stories, appreciate; the latter skilled specialists must finally appraise; but it is impossible to avoid noticing its ingenuity,

its basis of research (often long and hard), the clear and pleasing style in which the arguments are given. His folklore studies, though I think he was a little apt to recognise fewer factors than I should have postulated, deserve most careful attention, so suggestive and so ingenious are their hypotheses and conclusions. He had the keen, quick, fearless mental temper and the acute memory so often associated with the power of making scientific discoveries. I consider that he was among the first to really expose the weak points of the Teutonic School of early English history, and to show that pre-Teutonic elements must be fully acknowledged and their forces allowed for by every historian of these islands. His historical writing was distinguished by many of the qualities that mark the best work of J. R. Green. He possessed the historic imagination; he could see what had been impossible in the past and was mere bad guessing on the part of

moderns; he could frame reasonable hypotheses, good working theories; he was not easily diverted from his track by arguments based on "authority" or prejudice or rhetoric. He was a born teacher, an excellent and painstaking instructor, never sparing himself, remindful of his own difficulties in learning, and careful to explain things clearly that could be explained clearly, and to acknowledge that there were things that as yet were not capable of satisfactory explanation. His little "Anglo-Saxon Britain" marked a distinct advance when it came out, and connected the bookman again with the spade-man in the task of interpreting the early days of Teutonic colonisation in Britain. Of his verse, I admire the faithful and polished Attys translation above the rest. His guide-books seem to me both fresh and excellent, truly educational and admirably practical.

'There are certain favourite spots in the Isis meadows and banks, certain oft-trodden



walks near Dorking, a hillside in Wales, that will always be associated in my mind with Grant Allen. I used to think he talked best in the open air, and that the fireside was not his real coign of vantage. The walk was the crown and pinnacle of his day, the pleasure to look forward to and to look back on; every copse and hedgerow was a living museum to him, every roadside or field corner a botanical garden. He loved observing far better than reading, and he never shrank from thinking things out as far as he could. Hence there was perpetual interest in his talk and life. But if he had been blind and unlettered I should have loved him and respected him, for he was ever a close follower of Truth, and walked in noble companionship with Pity and Courage.—Yours faithfully,

‘F. YORK POWELL.’

Mr. Andrew Lang, who did not meet him till he had left Oxford, says in the genial

and generous tribute paid to the memory of his friend in the 'Daily News' three days after his death: 'Allen told me how he found scratched on an ancient pane of glass in the window of his rooms a rhyming mediæval Latin verse. The Latin I have forgotten, but the sense was, "Why tarriest thou? what makest thou here, at Oxford?" He caused a wire grating to be placed over the pane, outside, that it might not suffer from the casual pebble of regardless youth. Perhaps not many undergraduates would have taken so much trouble?' Mr. Bowman, the bursar of Merton, favours me with the following interesting note on this matter:—

The wire grating to which you refer has long ago disappeared, if it ever existed. The old distich painted on an ancient pane of glass in a window in Mob Quad ran—

Oxoniam quare venisti? præmeditare:

Nocte dieque cave tempus consumere prave.

This bit of glass was broken into fragments by some young Vandal a few years back, and the pieces, roughly put together, are now in my possession.



The unknown lingerer's question came home to Allen, and leaving Oxford 'with a decent degree and nothing much else in particular to brag about,' he 'took perforce,' as he had intimated to his friend Nicholson, 'to that refuge of the destitute, the trade of schoolmaster.' In his 'Sign of the Ship,' 'Longman's Magazine,' December 1899, Mr. Lang says: 'Others have written of Mr. Allen's genius, the most versatile, beyond comparison, of any man in our age. Had he been able to devote himself entirely to physical science, as he desired, it is not for me to conjecture what he might have added to the sum of human knowledge. But his education at Oxford had been classical, and he was an unendowed student of his favourite themes. He had to live by his pen, and by scientific work he could not live.' In Allen's own words, 'to teach Latin and Greek verse at Brighton College, Cheltenham College, Reading Grammar School, successively, was the extremely uncongenial task imposed

upon me by the chances of the universe.' Between his engagements at Cheltenham and Reading he was up at Oxford in 1872 as tutor to the sons of Lord Huntly, and it was then that he met his future wife, Miss Ellen Jerrard, at the house of her brother-in-law, Mr. Franklin Richards, then Lecturer of Trinity College. The union to which that meeting led was charged with a quarter of a century of unalloyed happiness for husband and wife. During that long time, Allen, never in robust health, was often prostrate with serious illness, aggravated, in the earlier years, by privation, and embittered by struggle, but the brave heart and helpful hand of his wife sustained him through it all. And when 'The Woman Who Did' was published, this was the inscription: 'To my dear Wife, to whom I have dedicated my twenty happiest years, I dedicate also this brief memorial of a less fortunate love.'

The meeting with Miss Jerrard was a case

of what Allen calls 'that divinest and deepest of human intuitions, love at first sight' ('Falling in Love; with other Essays on more exact Branches of Science,' p. 7). But to declare that love was another matter: Allen's affairs were at a low ebb; Miss Jerrard was portionless (had she been dowered, that would have been a fatal bar, since Allen declared that he would never marry a woman who had money), so he possessed his soul in such patience as the heart allowed. But in the spring of 1873 an offer of marriage had warrant in virtue of his successful candidature for the post of Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at the newly-founded Government College in Spanish Town, Jamaica, and in June of that year, before the honeymoon had ended, he and Mrs. Allen left England. Judging from the few examples that survive, his letters from Jamaica are the fullest that he ever penned. He was not a great letter-writer.

The larger number which have been sent to me, or which are in my possession, are brief and personal; hence the small space filled by illuminative material, so far as letters go, in this memoir. The explanation of their sparseness is that 'time is money.' In a short note from Algeria to Mr. Edmund Gosse, Allen says: 'I am so often ill that moments fit for writing are too precious to be used for anything but bread-winning.' He gave a jocular turn to this view of the matter one Whitsuntide at Aldeburgh. The party included three philologists, Canon Isaac Taylor, Professor Rhys, and the late Dr. Richard Morris, and one day the talk fell on the number of words used in their common avocations by country working folk. Professor Max Müller was cited as authority for the statement that 'some agricultural labourers have not three hundred words in their vocabulary' ('Lectures on Language,' i. 308). Allen at once challenged this, and in his measured, sonorous tones, twirling, as

was ever his wont, his little platyscopic lens between finger and thumb, began recounting all the things, and all the parts of things, with which a peasant has to deal every day. Ere the list was half through, Allen had well-nigh reached the stated limit, when he suddenly called out, 'Look here, you fellows, my price is two guineas a thousand words, and I'm not going on any longer.'

Letters, except when composed with an eye on the printer, are of the highest value, because the writer comes before us in undress, putting on 'no side,' as the phrase goes. In Allen's case, however, the lack of letters is of less moment because of the personal, familiar element which pervades all his work, bringing him into direct touch with his readers. 'I like your essays,' said Henri III. to Montaigne.—'Then, Sire, you'll like me. I am my essays.' So might Grant Allen have replied.

In the letters written to his mother-in-law there are some interesting passages about

the coloured population of Jamaica, and about the College which had, as its chief object, their education. It will be remembered that he is writing seven years after the negro rebellion, in the suppression of which Governor Eyre took so prominent a part:—

The negroes, under Sir John Grant's administration, are contented and peaceable. It seems that before the rebellion the whole political power in the Island was entirely in the hands of the planter class. How that class still regard the negroes I have had plenty of opportunity of observing already ; and though you know I have no exaggerated sympathy with blacks, yet I must say the way they are regarded by the whites is simply shameful. You know how English magistrates have decided in cases between employer and labourer, even when no distinction of race embittered the class feeling, and you can imagine what planter justice was like when dealt out to negroes. Besides this, the laws between master and servant were so bad that servants found it almost impossible to claim their wages in a Court of Law ; and consequently the wages were perpetually in arrear for weeks together. At last the negroes rebelled, but only, says Sir John and Judge Ker (who was here at the time), when human nature could stand it no longer. Then came the Commission, etc., which I need not recapitulate, and then Sir John Grant was sent out as an absolute autocrat—the old representative Government was abolished, and the whole power vested in the Governor, who



is responsible only to the English Colonial Office . . . The negroes are deeply attached to the new system ; they speak of the Governor as ' Papa Grant.' The whites, of course, are all up in arms against him, but nobody minds them. Their newspapers are brilliant specimens of uneducated vituperation. Chadwick [the Principal of the College] and I will come in for lots of it as soon as we get started. But to resume: the negroes, say those who know best, are never pugnacious ; they only rebel when they are absolutely driven to it : but as long as they are kindly treated and have justice dealt out to them, they lie contentedly under mango-trees, and don't care a brass farthing who governs them. In 1830 the Island must have been quite as advanced in all material civilisation as England was at that time ; now, it is as much a ruin as Greece or Egypt. Everywhere one sees splendid houses going to decay, solid bridges falling to pieces, deserted canefields or coffee plantations, overgrown with aloes and cactuses, in short, one vast sheet of desolation. It would be happy if one could set off against all this any improvement in the condition of the negro, but I see no difference between his condition here after forty years of freedom and his condition in South Carolina before the war—intellectually and morally I mean, of course. The country is fatally fertile. A negro earns nine shillings a week by labour which even as a Communist I consider easy ; of this he spends two, and saves seven. After a few weeks of work he has done enough for the quarter, and lies by in absolute idleness, mental and bodily, till he has spent his savings. But I am wandering from the personal question. . . . The College opens definitely on the 22nd Sept. (1873).



Of the prospects of this College Allen never spoke hopefully. Located in the old Government buildings, it was laid on ambitious lines, whereas, to quote his words years after, 'it should have been run as a Board School.' Three months after it was started, he wrote as follows to Mrs. Jerrard:—

The general prospects of the College look very black. On Friday last we were to examine intending students who entered their names for next term, but only two boys presented themselves, and they were both so ignorant that we had to turn them away; so we shall have to go on for another three months with our original three. One of these (they are all quadroons) is a solitary boarder, and occupies to himself a dormitory of sixteen cubicles, a large study, and a dining-hall with six long tables. Fortunately, the idea that it is lonely does not yet seem to have penetrated his pericranium. I had hoped that a good number of fellows might have come at the New Year, but we have been disappointed, and I am now inclined to give up all hopes of our success. A new Governor is coming out early in February, and it seems probable that soon after he comes he will inquire into the state of the College, and finding it a failure, break up the whole affair. In that case Judge Ker assures us most positively that we shall be no losers, and that care will be taken to provide for our interests in some way or other. I confess I was of opinion till very lately that if time was given to see how it

turned out, people would begin sending their sons by twos and threes, but I fear now that it is hopeless. The people don't want education, and won't take [it even if it is literally given away to them. I should not be surprised if you were to see us home again by next June.

As the sequel shows, the College was not abolished till 1876, Allen, in the meantime, succeeding to the Principalship on the death of Mr. Chadwick.

In the same and in other letters some persistent illusions about the tropics are dealt with:—

We take our ideas of the Tropics from the hothouses at Kew, just as though a West Indian took his ideas of English dwelling-houses from a picture of York Minster. Tropical scenery, in its ordinary aspect, is English scenery minus the green grass, the hedgerows, the singing birds, and the idealisable rustic or genuine Hodge. But in these mountains behind us (some six miles off) it is pretty much what one sees it in pictures, after making due allowance for the violent exaggeration of artists, who everywhere see things of extraordinary colours (*e.g.* purple sea) invisible to ordinary folks. My own private impression, as a mere *ιδιώτης*, is that there is no more colour in the tropics than in England, only there ain't so many people to tell one a tropical picture is over-coloured.

Speaking of the flora, he says : ' The fruits, of which one hears so much, are stringy and insipid ; the flowers don't grow ; and the "tropical vegetation" is a pure myth.' As for the fauna, he was wont to remark that there were fewer dangerous and venomous creatures in the tropics than in the British Isles !

There are relics, unfortunately, for the most part, only in fragmentary form, of correspondence on philosophical subjects between him and his brother-in-law, Mr. Franklin Richards. A few extracts from one of these letters have interest as containing the germs of the treatise on ' Force and Energy ' (first printed for private circulation in 1876, and published in enlarged form in 1888), and also as indicating his course of reading :—

' You say, " You must remember that Evolution is not a philosophic system ; it is only the highest Empirical generalisation

yet reached." The word I have wave-lined suggests the idea that you are on the lookout for a Cartesian or Leibnitzian "à priori" intelligible system. For such, I at least have long ceased to look. Your remarks in the review of Fraser (i.e. of his edition of "Berkeley") seem to show that you also have done the same, though here you object to Evolution for not being such an "Explanation" of the universe as you believe impossible. I mean "Explanation" in its popular sense—something rendering the universe more intelligible and "à priori" cognisable, as distinguished from a subsumption of individual facts under a single ultimate law or synthesis of laws. I cannot quite understand your standpoint. In your purely scientific capacity you seem to be a Positivist (in the best interpretation of the word), while in your metaphysical phase you seem to be hunting for a self-evident cosmos-formula. I should agree with you that Evolution is not an ultimate philo-

sophic system, but probably on different grounds. Herbert Spencer's second volume of Psychology ought to have been the first of the series. In the system which I am evolving for myself (for every man "must" make his system, good or bad), I begin with analysis of everything down to the empirical ego (G. A.), his sensations and ideas. I then build up from these the other egos, human and animal, in a sliding scale of intelligence, and I then proceed to Matter as an unknown substratum; after which I get to the law of Evolution, though I differ from H. S. as to its statement, especially as regards "integration of matter and dissipation of force," for which I would substitute "concentration of attractive and dissipation of repulsive energies." But that field is too wide for rapid treatment. To return, surely you would allow such a creed as I have sketched out to be a "philosophic system," whether right or wrong. I find no such

break between my metaphysics and my concrete sciences as you do. Analysis leads me down to the ego. Thence I build up other egos and the non-ego. Finally, I get to the uniformities observed in the non-ego. I have already worked out the greater part of this scheme on paper. Berkeley, Hume, Mill, and you have sufficiently done the analytical part for me, and I frankly acknowledge its necessity. In the beginning of my "Philosophy of History" (I fear an abortive book, or one requiring many years for its development) I have worked out the second step—the existence of other egos. In the paper I sent you the other day I have started from self and the other egos, and worked out the existence of the non-ego. Granted which last, I accept in the main H. S.'s statement of its laws as phenomenally known. So that, whether I am right or wrong, I at least "have" a system which is thoroughly consistent throughout. I



know, of course, where you will find the flaw in it—at the first introduction of anything beyond the empirically known, namely, the other egos, and there we must for the present agree to differ. [I will, however, pay you one compliment, that you are the “only” man who has ever seen that the real question was as to the existence of other minds; that another mind is an idea transcending consciousness just as much as matter does. There I am wholly with you. By all means, let us be pure individual egoists, or let us be transfigured realists; but don’t let us hang between as mere idealists, transcending consciousness to prove (or to accept without proof) other minds, and refusing to transcend to prove matter. That was the strong point I clutched at when I wrote my first paper on Idealism, and I have never seen it grasped by anybody else except you.

‘With respect to my correction of H. S.



in the matter of attractive and repulsive force, I believe it is a real and important discovery, but one of which I shall never be able to make any use, because, like all my discoveries, it's only a "glimpse." Every day, in every science I know anything of, I am catching "glimpses," but I don't know enough to articulate them. Some day some other fellow will find them all out and be a great man. I tried to articulate this one to Fisher, but he merely wrote back that he didn't understand me, and didn't much believe in molecular physics treated "à priori." I shall try to state it to you.' (Then follows an outline of the theory of 'two powers in the universe, of opposite nature to one another — force and energy. Of these, force is attractive, or "aggregative"; and energy repulsive, or "disjunctive," the action of these powers producing that alternate rhythm of phenomena which we observe in the universe around us.' The theory

met with adverse criticism from physicists, but Allen's faith in it as interpreting cosmic dynamics remained unshaken. His son tells me that in the course of his fatal illness he said, 'I want no memorial over my remains; tell those who care for anything that I may have done to buy a copy of "Force and Energy."'")

The letter continues: 'I have been reading a great deal lately. I have done a good deal of Merivale, whom I find intolerably dry and wanting in philosophic comprehensiveness of view. With the earlier part I read Cæsar (B.G. I haven't the B.C.), and with the later I am reading Tacitus. When I have finished him, I mean to read Gibbon, whom, I am ashamed to say, I have never yet tackled. I have also gone in for a course of Comte, whose vulgar and ignorant dogmatism, contradicted at every turn by the results of later science, has given me a great distaste for him. I find in almost every case, alike in

Astronomy, Physics, (especially Acoustics and Optics), Physiology, and Sociology, he is bitterly adverse to the "only" investigations which seem to me worth making.

I must read more Physics. I have also been engaged in dissecting a couple of brains and spinal cords (one of them a hanged murderer's) which our doctor got for me. (So, you see, I am not idle, but the thirst for truth still impels me. When is there ever a chance of its being sufficiently slaked?) Our doctor is no anatomist, and less of a physiologist, but I only wanted ocular demonstration of what I had already learned from diagrams. It is dirty work, and I felt indisposed to eat my dinner the three days I was engaged on it. I mean, if I can, to borrow Maudsley's "Physiology and Pathology of Mind" from the Public Library in Kingston, so as to follow out my facts while they are fresh.

'Through the term I have been lecturing on the Senses, with special reference to

Pleasure and Pain, and on the *Æsthetic* Emotion, which seems to me a part of the same subject. I find it very useful, as forcing one to formulate one's latent ideas, and I think I shall write another rejiciend paper on the question as soon as I have finished the "Analysis of Poetry" which I have now in hand, and which proves a tough customer, needing much revising and recasting. . . .

'P.S.—In spite of what I have written about Comte, reading him has done me some good, and I have certainly gained a clearer idea of what he calls "*l'hierarchy des sciences.*" Have you read Schopenhauer? If not, do. You will like him.'

Probably that philosopher's '*Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*' is responsible for the poem called 'Pessimism,' which in a subsequent letter Allen sent to Mr. Richards, and which is printed in '*The Lower Slopes.*'

The foregoing extracts show how omnivorous was his taste in reading, and in what variety of fields he browsed. Further hints of this are given in a letter to Mr. Nicholson, under date of 19th September 1880: 'I spent the latter part of my three years in Jamaica on Anglo-Saxon and Early English History,' and in the Introduction to his translation of the 'Attis' (1892) he says: 'It is now nearly twenty years ago that I read Catullus's masterpiece with my class of students in an abortive little Government College in Spanish Town.' One of his original axioms, full of suggestion, and with the 'soupçon' of paradox wherewith so much that he said was flavoured, was, 'You must never let schooling interfere with education' (see 'Eye versus Ear,' in 'Post-Prandial Philosophy,' p. 129). He practised what he preached. Unwavering as he was in the fundamentals of the faith delivered to him in his undergraduate days,

the area embraced by that faith was so vast that he had as little need as desire to transcend it. He agreed with Goethe that 'man is born not to solve the problems of the universe, but to find out where the problem begins, and then to restrain himself within the limits of the comprehensible.' The thirst after knowledge and the zest to apply it were insatiate in him: to the end of his days he was as a boy at school, as throughout his life he remained a boy at heart. And the fruition of his three years in Jamaica is seen in all his after-work. He came back with a store of facts of surpassing importance for his scientific treatises and fugitive essays; and of materials for his more typical stories, notably 'The Reverend John Creedy,' 'In All Shades,' and 'The Devil's Die.' As he remarks in a paper on 'Tropical Education':—

The Tropics are the norma of nature—the way things mostly are and always have been. They represent to us

the common condition of the whole world during by far the greater part of its entire existence. Not only are they still in the strictest sense the biological headquarters; they are also the standard or central type by which we must explain all the rest of nature both in man and beast, in plant and animal ('Science in Arcady,' p. 23).

Whenever I meet a cultivated man who knows his Tropics—and more particularly one who has known his Tropics during the formative period of mental development, say from eighteen to thirty—I feel instinctively that he possesses certain keys of man and nature, certain clues to the problems of the world we live in, not possessed in anything like the same degree by the mere average annual output of Oxford or of Heidelberg. I feel that we talk like Freemasons together—we of the Higher Brotherhood who have worshipped the sun, 'præsentio rem deum,' in his own nearer temples (Ibid. p. 22).

While Allen was in Jamaica, the deepening impression which the 'Synthetic Philosophy' made on him impelled him to address some verses to Mr. Herbert Spencer, which were published twenty years afterwards in 'The Lower Slopes.' To these Mr. Spencer made the following acknowledgment, which with subsequent



extracts from certain of his letters, he courteously permits me to print:—

38 Queen's Gardens, Bayswater, W.  
10th Dec. 1874.

My dear Sir,—Your letter and its enclosure are so unusual in their kinds, that ordinary forms of response seem scarcely appropriate. Fitly to acknowledge so strong an expression of sympathy is a task for which I find myself quite unprepared.

Naturally, it is grateful to me to find, here and there, one who recognises the meaning and scope of the work to which I have devoted my life—the more grateful because there are few who have the breadth of view for seeing more than the particular applications of the doctrine of Evolution. Excepting only my friends, Professors Huxley and Tyndall, and my American friends, Professor Fiske and Professor Youmans (Editor of the 'Popular Science Monthly') I know none, personally, who have from the beginning seen the general purpose which runs through the System of Synthetic Philosophy. Apart from other reasons, your letter is pleasant to me as implying that even in remote regions there are others, unknown to me, having that mental kinship which is shown by a wider comprehension than that of the specialist.

Respecting the sentiment expressed in your verses, it is scarcely proper for me to say anything, unless to disclaim a merit so high as that ascribed. I am not debarred, however, from expressing an opinion respecting the ren-

dering of the ideas, which seems to me admirable, alike in its choice of language, and in the music of the versification.

I may add that the effect of your eulogy is rather the reverse of that which, at first sight, might be anticipated ; the effect being to produce a renewed sense of the incongruity which, in all cases, exists more or less between the author as manifested in his works, and the author as he actually exists.—I am, very sincerely yours,

HERBERT SPENCER.

On the closing of the College in 1876, Allen, with added intellectual capital, and modest compensation for the abolition of his post, returned to England, whither Mrs. Allen, whose health had suffered from a tropical climate, had preceded him by some months. His return was the resumption of a period of privation which he had not known since the Oxford days. There was no demand for the solid yet attractive wares which he had to offer. Serious himself, he took the public seriously. Three years of absence had put him out of touch with the literary market, and he had to learn through much tribulation that science, outside its com-

mercial application, meant starvation. 'I produced,' he says, 'a hundred or more magazine articles on various philosophical and scientific subjects, every one of which I sent to the editors of leading reviews, and every one of which was punctually "declined with thanks," or committed without even that polite formality to the editorial waste-paper basket.' Settled in lodgings for the time being at Oxford, where he earned a little by 'coaching, he used some of his spare time in writing his first book, 'Physiological Æsthetics,' and some of his spare cash—balance of his compensation money—in publishing it.

The central idea of the book—the origin of the higher pleasure which we derive from natural or artistic products—had, as shown in one of his letters to Mr. Richards, occupied his thoughts while in Jamaica. Mr. Ruskin had said that the question 'why we receive pleasure from some forms and colours and not from others, is no more

to be asked or answered than why we like sugar and dislike wormwood.' And Darwin also, in speaking of the constitution of man and the lower animals for the perception of differences in colours and sounds, had added, 'but why this should be so we know no more than why certain bodily sensations are agreeable and others disagreeable.' This was relegating the origin of the gustatory and other senses to the realm of the inexplicable; and hence, armed with Mr. Spencer's 'Principles of Psychology,' Professor Bain's 'Senses and Intellect,' and some current textbooks on physiology, Allen showed how the foundation of all sensation is in the laws of nervous action. 'I feel convinced,' he says, 'that every æsthetic feeling, though it may incidentally contain intellectual and complex emotional factors, has necessarily, for its ultimate and principal component, pleasures of sense, ideal or actual, either as tastes, smells, touches, sounds, forms, or colours'

(p. 193). After showing the general relation of pleasure and pain to our organism and its circumstances, a body of evidence was presented in proof of the origin of existing likes and dislikes in æsthetic matters from the action of natural selection. The argument thus fell into line with the doctrine of Evolution, and warranted the following correspondence on the dedication of the book :—

10 Beaumont Street, Oxford,  
Feb. 26 (1877).

Dear Mr. Spencer,—I have now in the press a short work on ‘Physiological Æsthetics,’ which I hope to get out in six weeks or two months. I venture to ask your leave to dedicate it to you. I believe everything which I say in it is strictly in accordance with your views of psychological evolution, and I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to secure correctness in my facts by submitting the various chapters to specialists in their particular lines, whose assistance I have been able to obtain here. I think, therefore, that my book will not be one of which you need be ashamed to receive the dedication. As I know, however, that the favour which I ask is not to be lightly granted, I enclose a short abstract of my argument, from which you will be able to judge of the general tenor and the extent of its

accordance with your own views. I should be immensely obliged if you could find time to glance through it.

I must congratulate you upon the issue—even in its present unfinished state—of your sixth volume. Its reception by the reviews, though of course not what one could desire, certainly shews the immense advance of the public mind in the appreciation of sociological inquiry.

My post in Jamaica has been abolished, and my intention at present is to remain in England.—Yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

37 Queen's Gardens, Bayswater, W.  
28th Feb. 1877.

Dear Professor Allen,—I am greatly pleased with the programme of your 'Physiological Æsthetics,' received yesterday. It appears to me highly philosophical in its conception and admirable in its arrangement; and further, you have carried out the general principles in new directions with great originality and insight. So far as I can gather from this sketch, the work deserves a great success, and will, I think, be a very valuable development of Evolution doctrines.

You may therefore infer that I have great gratification in assenting to your proposed dedication. Indeed, I think I shall have every reason to be proud of a disciple who achieves so important an extension of the general theory as this which your work promises to do.

I have just been writing to my American friend, Professor Youmans, and have named to him your forthcoming work and the high opinion I have formed of it from the pro-



gramme. I have suggested that possibly something might be done with it in America, and have said that I would forward to him some of the early proof-sheets if you would let me have them, by way of enabling him to judge. I have also said that I would request you to send to him the programme which you have sent to me, and which I now return. [The rest of the letter is missing; it was probably mutilated to satisfy some autograph-hunter.]

38 Queen's Gardens, Bayswater, W.

May 9, 1877.

Dear Mr. Allen,—I have been reading the earlier part of your book with much satisfaction, and it thus far fulfils the anticipations raised by the programme. Beyond the advance you make in the exposition of the theory of Pleasure and Pain, and beyond the important development constituted by your differentiation of *Æsthetics* from Play proper, which becomes obvious the moment it is pointed out, the part I have read strikes me by its fertility of illustration and clearness of expression.

The only criticism of moment that has occurred to me respects the arrangement of certain minor divisions in the chapter on the *Differentia* of *Æsthetics*. It seems to me that the sections entitled *Æsthetic Taste* and *Æsthetic Education* suspend too much the general argument. The reasoning should, I think, pass more directly from the definition of æsthetic feelings in general to the treatment of the special æsthetic feelings dealt with in the next chapter.

I yesterday responded to a letter from Mr. Fry respecting



the Head Mastership of the Salt Schools, and had pleasure in expressing a high opinion of your fitness.

Have you sent a copy of your book to the 'Revue Philosophique'? If not, I will forward the duplicate copy you have sent me to the editor, Prof. Ribot, who will doubtless review it.—Truly yours,

HERBERT SPENCER.

The letter to Mr. Fry, probably handed by him to Allen for future use, was found with the Spencer correspondence. Mr. Spencer speaks of his special 'fitness as a teacher and director of teachers. . . . If he can communicate ideas orally as well as he does it by writing, his abilities as an instructor must be unusually high. His book still more than his conversation shows a familiarity with science in general such as would specially fit him for directing an education having for its aim scientific culture at large.'

Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace acknowledged a copy of the book as follows:—

Rosehill, Dorking,  
Oct. 7th, 1877.

My dear Sir,—I have read the passages you marked, as well as a good many other parts of your book, with

much pleasure. I was particularly pleased with your suggestion (which had not occurred to me) that fruits, in our sense of the word, are much more recent developments than flowers, because they attract chiefly mammals and birds instead of insects.

There is, I admit, a partial contradiction between the view that 'red' excites animals on account of its glaring contrast, and that yet the perception of it by man is recent. The latter view must, I believe, be incorrect, and should be stated, I think, even more hypothetically than I have put it. I have just been reading Mr. Gladstone's interesting paper, which is almost wholly on Homer's colour terms, or rather the absence of them. The evidence is most curious, but I think it only goes to show that language was imperfect, and that 'colour' was too infinitely varied and of too little importance to early man to have received a systematic nomenclature. 'Flowers' and 'birds' and 'insects' were despised, and the colours of more important objects, as the 'sea,' 'sky,' 'earth,' 'iron,' 'brass,' etc., were not only not pure colours (generally), but subject to endless fluctuations.

Your remarks on 'nuts' are very good. I quite overlooked that case, and shall refer to you when I reprint my paper with others in a volume shortly.

I think that all the coloured fruits which are poisonous to 'man' are eatable to some birds, etc. They are far too numerous to be accounted for otherwise. — With many thanks, believe me, yours faithfully,

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

Published, as has been stated, at the author's risk, 'Physiological *Æsthetics*' was, financially, unsuccessful. The sale did not reach three hundred copies, leaving the author some £50 to the bad. But the book escaped the inglorious fate of a 'remainder' by passing 'out of print' in a fire at the publishers, who awarded Allen £15 as compensation.

But it had a 'succès d'estime,' resulting, indirectly, in cash as well as 'kudos.' 'Not only did it bring me into immediate contact with several among the leaders of thought in London, but,' Allen adds, 'it also made my name known in a very modest way, and induced editors—those arbiters of literary fate—to give a second glance at my unfortunate manuscripts. Almost immediately after its appearance, Leslie Stephen (I omit the Mr. "honoris causa") accepted two papers of mine for publication in the "Cornhill." "Carving a Coconut" was the first, and it brought me in twelve guineas.

That was the very first money I earned in literature. I had been out of work for months, the abolition of my post in Jamaica having thrown me on my beam-ends, and I was overjoyed at so much wealth poured suddenly in upon me. Other magazine articles followed in due course, and before long I was earning a modest—a very modest—and precarious income, yet enough to support myself and my family.'

'You have done,' writes Leslie Stephen, 'what is very rare and very excellent in journalism: you have made a distinct place for yourself, and have done a real service in spreading some popular notions of science. Few journalists can say as much for themselves.' And in that service Mr. Stephen had given a helping hand by according space to the science-made-easy articles which were produced by Allen, Richard Proctor, and other gifted exponents of those results of modern research which accrued from 1859 onwards. Allen still dallied at intervals with

the Muses, and while staying at Lyme Regis, his wife's native town, in the summer of 1877, he composed 'Pisgah' (printed in 'The Lower Slopes'), and sent it with the following letter to Mr. Spencer:—

Broad Street, Lyme Regis, Dorset,  
Aug. 16, '77.

Dear Mr. Spencer,—I had been lately reading the supplementary chapters of your 'Sociology,' which you were kind enough to give me, and comparing them with certain quasi-prophetic passages in the 'Biology,' 'Psychology,' and 'Social Statics,' whereupon the enclosed lines suggested themselves to my mind. As my metrical lucubrations are fated never to appear in print, I thought you might perhaps like to see them in MS. In sending them, I need hardly remind 'you' that lyrical poetry, being essentially the crystallised form of a fleeting emotional state, is necessarily somewhat one-sided. Like the 'instantaneous photographs' of a London street, it fixes in factitious permanence the passing aspect of a changeful whole. The side I have shown here is the gloomy one: a different emotional moment would show it in brighter colours.

Pray don't take the trouble to answer or acknowledge this note. I know the value of your time to humanity too well to wish any of it wasted on such personal trifles.—  
Yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

Hearty as was the reception of his science 'middles,' there was the old trouble of space-limits in the magazines, and resulting uncertainty of income. Hence Allen's willing acceptance of an offer of continuous work for some months under the late Sir William Hunter in the preparation of his gigantic 'Gazetteer of India,' involving removal to Edinburgh. 'I wrote,' Allen says, 'with my own hand the greater part of the articles on the North-West Provinces, the Punjaub, and Sind, in those twelve big volumes.' Back at Oxford in 1878, he was thrown once more upon fitful and fugitive work, and, casting about for new channels wherein to place it, wrote to Mr. Andrew Chatto, 'most generous of men, and one of my earliest and staunchest literary supporters . . . to whose kindness and sympathy I owe as much as to any one in England'—a verdict which every one who has had like relations with Mr. Chatto will indorse.

2 St. John Street, Oxford,  
Feb. 6, '78.

Dear Sir,—May I introduce myself to you as the author of a small work on 'Physiological Æsthetics,' and a contributor, amongst other periodicals, to the 'Cornhill Magazine'? I usually write articles of a simple scientific sort—'Carving a Coconut,' 'Analysis of an Obelisk,' 'Dissecting a Daisy,' are the contributions of mine to the 'Cornhill'—but I have a few lighter pieces by me which I am anxious to insert in some popular magazine. One of these, 'An Epicurean Tour,' describing in an easy, chatty way, with copious digressions, the various good things which I found during a trip to America, I should be glad to forward to you for consideration, if you thought it at all likely to suit your wants. I do not send it herewith, because I know most casual volunteer contributions are little secure of a reading amid the many duties of editorial life.—Yours faithfully,

GRANT ALLEN.

It is needless to burden a brief memoir with letters of more or less the same tenor, and it suffices to note that this offer led to the pleasant results indicated in the tribute paid by author to publisher. The summer of 1878 found Allen again at Lyme Regis, where Jerrard Grant, his only child, was born in July. Meanwhile, from the time of



his stay in Edinburgh, he had filled intervals of leisure in preparing another book which was an expansion of materials collected for a chapter on the 'Genesis of *Æsthetics*' in its predecessor. It was entitled 'The Colour Sense: its Origin and Development; an Essay in Comparative Psychology,' and was published, in Trübner's 'English and Foreign Philosophical Library,' in 1879. The terms were 'half-profits,' a system the charm of which Douglas Jerrold said lies in its leading to no 'division' between authors and publishers. At the end of ten years the book had resulted in a total payment of something under £30 to its writer, who sarcastically remarks thereupon, 'As it took me only eighteen months, and involved little more than five or six thousand references, this result may be regarded as very fair pay for an educated man's time and labour, and should warrant the reproach of thoughtless critics for deserting

the noble pursuit of science in favour of fiction and filthy lucre.' Briefly stated, the design of the book is to show that the colour sense in man is no recent acquisition, but derived by him from his fruit-eating ancestors, who, by exercise of the sense of vision upon bright-coloured food stuffs, developed a special nervous organisation capable of discriminating between the various shades of colour. In one chapter Allen applied his rare gift of lucid exposition to interpretation of the fascinating theory of flower-fertilisation, and modification of form and colour by insects, which was suggested by Sprengel, and elaborated by Hermann Müller and others. 'The colour sense of bees and butterflies has metamorphosed the world, and we must seek for its indications on every plain and mountain of every country in the earth' (p. 94). Following the story of interaction between plant and animal to the human period, Allen effected an easy

conquest over the Teutonic theories of development of the colour sense within historical epochs. These theories were supported, on purely philological grounds, by Mr. Gladstone, and others equally conservative, who welcomed and backed arguments, good, bad, or indifferent, against the inclusion of man, 'body, soul, and spirit,' as a product of evolution.

Among the letters which the book evoked, the following, from the pen of the distinguished co-formulator with Darwin of the theory of the origin of species, has chief interest:—

Waldron Edge, Dupperts Hill,  
Croydon, Feb. 17th, 1879.

Dear Sir,—Very many thanks for your book on 'The Colour Sense.' I have just finished reading it through, and I have seldom read a book with more pleasure. It is full of original and suggestive matter, and is admirable in its clearness and the thorough manner in which many aspects of the subject are discussed.

Of course, I totally dissent from your adoption of 'sexual selection' as a 'vera causa,' though of course you are quite justified in following Darwin rather than me as an authority. I think you overstrain many parts of your argument,

especially the connection of bright colours in animals with the colours of the food. I also think you lay far too great stress on our knowledge of the first appearance of certain groups of plants and insects; but I shall probably deal with these questions in a notice I may write of your book.

I must say I do not see the least force in what you say as to the probable 'identity' of colour sense in 'ourselves' and 'insects.' For it is clear that the optical organs of these two have been developed 'separately'; and if the sensations were 'alike,' it would be a 'coincidence' which we have no reason to expect. The fact that insects differentiate most of the contrasted colours by no means proves, or even affords any probability, that their 'sensations' are anything 'like' ours, and I still maintain that the probability is they are 'unlike.' With 'birds' and ourselves, on the contrary, we may be almost sure the sensations are similar, because our eyes and nervous systems are derived probably from a common ancestor who had both well fairly developed.

A day or two ago, I received from a gentleman residing in Germany a very clever article on the 'Origin of the Colour Sense,' in which he shows physiological grounds for the belief in the great inferiority of the colour sense in all mammals, and the inferiority even of ourselves to birds.

I am very sorry you did not put a good index to your book. It is most difficult to find any special point you want, and causes endless trouble. I feel so strongly on this that I think the publication of Indexless books should be 'felony' without benefit of Clergy! [Compare with this mild penalty that suggested—was it not by Carlyle?—to send the felon who makes no index to his book a couple

of miles the other side of hell, where the devil can't reach him for the stinging nettles.—E. C.]

I need not wish your book success, for it is sure to be successful, as it well deserves to be.—Yours very faithfully,

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

P.S.—In my original paper in 'Macmillan's Magazine' [September 1877], I spoke doubtfully about the prehistoric want of colour sense, because the subject came upon me suddenly just as I had finished my paper. I still think, however, that 'colour blindness' is an indication of imperfection, and I hope evidence will soon be obtained as to its equal prevalence or absence in some semi-civilised race. I doubt its being a product of civilisation, since civilised man makes more use of colour than savage man. It is an interesting and important question.—A. R. W.

In an undated letter (why will people omit a stroke or two, the absence of which —'experto crede'—often causes hours to be spent in arranging correspondence? Allen was a great sinner in this line), presumably referring to the 'Colour Sense,' Darwin says: 'I have read the whole of your book with "great interest." It contains very many views new to me, and highly ingenious, and some new facts.

'I am glad that you defend sexual selec-

tion : I have no fear about its ultimate fate, though now at a discount. Wallace's explanation of, for instance, the display of a Peacock seems to me mere empty words.'

The tribute paid by Darwin, Spencer, and Wallace to Allen's original contributions to theories which he popularised is sufficing answer to some critics who, let it be hoped, through imperfect acquaintance with his work, accord him no higher level than that of a skilful scientific middle-man. That his modesty claimed only this as his function is the greater warrant for crediting him with the independent collection of facts whose value was recognised by the founders of the doctrine of Evolution. In the preface to the 'Colour Sense' he says:—

‘One of the main necessities of science at the present day is the existence of that organising class whose want was pointed out by Comte, and has been further noted by Mr. Herbert Spencer. To this class I would aspire, in a humble capacity, to belong. But



the organising student cannot also himself be a specialist in all the sciences whose results he endeavours to co-ordinate; and he must, therefore, depend for his data upon the original work of others. If specialists find technical errors in such co-ordinated results, they should point them out frankly for correction and improvement, but they should not regard them as fit subjects for carping criticism.' In this connection, it is not out of place to quote what the late Sir Fitzjames Stephen says in reference to Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall': 'The slight importance of the mistakes which have been discovered in it, shows with what judgment he availed himself of the researches of others. If it is a reproach to use them, it is difficult to see what is the use of making them' ('*Horæ Sabbaticæ*,' ii. p. 390). And, in fact, the service rendered by a skilful and accurate expositor is not to be lightly underrated in these days of specialisation in every branch, and in all the minutiae of science, with



its resulting obscuration of the interrelation between all departments of knowledge, and blurring of the sense of unity and continuity.

Although 'The Colours of Flowers as Illustrated in the British Flora,' and 'Flowers and their Pedigrees,' were not published until some few years after 'The Colour Sense,' the development of certain theories in them which could be only hinted at in that book warrants reference to them at this point, and, moreover, they further substantiate the claim made on behalf of Allen's original work, notably in botany. In this matter it is a privilege to be able to quote the weighty testimony of Dr. Sydney H. Vines, Sherardian Professor of Botany in the University of Oxford, who in kindest response to my request has sent me the following memorandum:—

'In his botanical works—of which the most important are "The Colours of Flowers" (1882) and "Flowers and their Pedigrees"

(1886)—Grant Allen showed that he possessed in a high degree the qualities which go to make the true naturalist. Every page gives evidence of his exceptional power of accurate observation, which made him the first-rate field-botanist that he undoubtedly was. But he was much more than this. His observations in the field were but the raw material upon which his eager and well-trained intelligence proceeded to work. Each fact at once raised the question of how? and why? so that the careful study of a single common flower suggested various more or less complicated problems, to which he sought the solutions with no small degree of success.

‘To take one or two illustrative instances. In studying the colours of flowers, he was led, naturally enough, to consider the question of the origin, the phylogeny, of the petals. The prevalent view at the time, based mainly on Goethe’s theory of metamorphosis, was that the floral leaves were to be traced

back to the foliage leaves; in other words, that metamorphosis in the leaves had followed an ascending course; though it was recognised, even by Goethe himself, that descending metamorphosis—that is, the conversion of the more highly specialised floral leaves into others of simpler nature—might and did actually occur. The evidence for this view is that, as a rule, the vegetative precede the reproductive organs in ontogenesis. The conclusion at which Grant Allen arrived, and which he calls “heretical,” was quite the opposite of this. Basing himself upon the weighty phylogenetic evidence, that the most ancient flowers, e.g. those of the Gymnosperms, have only reproductive leaves and no perianth-leaves, he asserted that the latter must have been derived from the former; that the petal, for example, is a degenerate or sterilised stamen. Subsequent writers, though apparently without any knowledge of Grant Allen’s work, have confirmed and extended his line of thought, notably

Prantl (1888), with special reference to the Ranunculaceæ, and Professor Bower (1894), with special reference to the higher Cryptogams, in a manner which is tending to profoundly modify our morphological conceptions, though the subject is still under discussion.

‘Another deeply interesting conclusion to which he was led by the study of our commonest flower is “that the Daisy-group, including these other composites with tinted rays, forms the very head and crown of the vegetable creation.” Whilst it is true that this view had been already expressed, especially by French botanists, there is no reason to doubt that Grant Allen arrived at it by the force of his own remarkable insight.

‘It would be easy to multiply instances of this kind were it necessary. Suffice it to say that the essential characteristics of Grant Allen’s botanical work are his adherence to the phylogenetic method, and his

appreciation of the importance of a careful study of the relation of each kind of plant to its environment. It is interesting to observe that much of the progress of the science, since he wrote, has been made along just these two lines. The pursuit of the phylogenetic method has led, and is still leading, to a more adequate comprehension of the affinities of the larger groups of plants; whilst the study of the relation of the plant to its environment—under the name of oecology or phytonomics—has grown to be almost a science in itself.

‘It seems natural to regret that, owing to the force of circumstances, Grant Allen was not in a position to devote his powers exclusively to the science for which he displayed such singular aptitude. But it is possible that, in the guise of set scientific papers, the exposition of his views would have lost much of that irresistible charm with which his actual popular style of presentation is endowed. One cause for regret undoubtedly

remains; and that is that he was not able to fulfil the promise made in the preface to "Flowers and their Pedigrees," that he would write a "Functional Companion to the British Flora."

To the theory that petals have generally been formed from the expanded filaments of stamens, Allen added an ingenious speculation on the original colour of the earliest flowers. The fact that the stamens of flowers of the simplest, and therefore more primitive, type, are yellow, led him to the inference that the earliest flowers derived from them were yellow also. It was shown that the changes in the colours of flowers, which are of course chemically induced, take place in regular order, e.g. yellow flowers becoming white or pink, and then passing through red and purple to blue, this order being without exception and never reversed. In acknowledging a 'Cornhill' article on the subject, Darwin wrote: 'Many years ago I

thought it highly probable that petals were in all cases transformed stamens. I forget (excepting the water-lily) what made me think so ; but I am sure that your evolutionary argument never occurred to me, as it is too striking and apparently valid ever to be forgotten. I cannot help doubting about petals being naturally yellow : I speak only from vague memory, but I think that the filaments are generally white, or almost white, and surely it is the filament which is developed into the petal. I remember some purple and bright yellow filaments, but these seemed to me to serve by adding colour to the white flower. Is it not the pollen alone which renders most stamens yellow at a cursory glance? Many thanks for the pleasure which your article has given me.'

Darwin, ever generous in recognition of the contributions made by others to the strengthening of his theory, not only gratified Allen by a presentation copy of the



'Origin of Species,' which was, of course, accorded the place of honour on his well-filled 'ex dono auctorum' shelf, but subscribed towards the gift of a microscope with which a group of scientific friends made him happy.

Such encouragement was as welcome as it was deserved, for Allen was soon to have the lesson that man cannot live by science alone reinforced. Back in London in 1879, he joined the staff of the 'Daily News.' The information he had gained when preparing articles for the 'Indian Gazetteer,' served him in good stead for leader-writing on the Afghan campaign. But the strain and the late hours which work on a daily paper involved told on his always precarious health, and he accepted with relief the lighter demands of weekly journalism, becoming a principal contributor to 'London.' Andrew Lang, Robert Louis Stevenson, and other coming men were on the staff of that brilliant paper. However, as this letter to

Mr. Nicholson tells, that channel of support soon dried:—

22 Bonchurch Road, North Kensington, W.

April 29, '79.

. . . I write now to ask whether you happen to know of any work that I could do. As far as recognition goes, I am doing very well—this week I have got into the 'Fortnightly,' and I am going soon to give a Friday evening at the Royal Institution. But I cannot make money enough to keep us afloat. It strikes me you may possibly know of some literary hackwork—index-making, cataloguing, compiling, or anything of that sort—which I should be very glad to do. To tell you the truth, I am very hard up for employment, as the little weekly paper on which I used to work, 'London,' has come to grief, and I can find nothing to replace it. I am ready to turn my hand to anything, if only it can be got. Can you help me by any suggestion?—Yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

This letter, touching in its subdued 'de profundis' note, with never a word of complaint or querulousness, may perhaps suffice as a quietly rebukeful answer to the remark heard ever and anon, 'What a pity Grant Allen took to novel-writing!' Yes; 'the pity of it.' An article here and there at

uncertain intervals, while the calls of the landlord, the butcher, and the baker, and, unfortunately, the doctor too, were not uncertain. A gratuitous lecture before a well-dined audience, heedless whether the lecturer went back to Grub Street, or 'No Grub' Street—why this wonder that he 'took the downward path that leads to fiction'?

Some miscellaneous work which Mr. Nicholson, who was then librarian of the London Institution, was able to offer, varied by a trip to Guernsey to examine a school there, helped to carry Allen along till the autumn of 1879. But bronchial and other troubles made it necessary that he should winter abroad, and consequently he left Lyme Regis for Hyères, where he remained till May 1880, working, as health permitted, at articles for various magazines.

9 Boulevard des Isles d'Or,  
Hyères, Feb. 29 (1880).

Dear Mr. Spencer,—Many thanks for your note and kind inquiries. I am glad to say that my health has on the whole very decidedly improved since coming here, and

that I hope to return in the spring fit for work again. We have not left Hyères, which we think on further acquaintance is the best fitted for invalids of all the Riviera towns; but last week I had not been feeling so well, and wanted change, so we went over to Nice for eight days, merely by way of a short trip. Our winter here has been really delightful, and we are now enjoying most lovely spring weather. I am extremely thankful that I have been enabled to escape this very severe winter in England. I hope your stay in Egypt was a pleasant one, and that you have returned stronger and fresher, to give us a new instalment of the *Sociology*. From your inquiries about the aloes, I am inclined to suppose you are turning your attention once more for a while to biological questions.

As regards the aloe, I shall be very glad to get you the leaf you wish for, and have no doubt I shall be easily able to do so. But we do not propose returning to England till the first week in May; and therefore I think (as you may want it for some immediate purpose) I had better get the first one I can find, and send it to you by *Parcels Express*. I suppose I am right in understanding you to mean the large prickly *Agave*, which grows all about the rocks at Hyères, and has a flowering stem some fifteen feet or so high.—Yours very sincerely, GRANT ALLEN.

That Allen would not have joined the ranks of professional novelists but for 'res angusta domi' is almost certain, and the first

steps were taken with some little reluctance, because this meant quittance, at least for the time being, of realms charged with the speculations and inquiries dear to his heart. But he was a better story-teller than he knew; 'a most successful artist,' such is the judgement of Mr. Andrew Lang, 'in the art for which he did not care.' He cared, however, more and more for it as time went on, taking a real pleasure in plot and construction, and finding that pleasure enhanced by the opportunity which the novel afforded as the vehicle whereby heedful ear might be gained for views and opinions which, otherwise, would obtain no hearing. In his judgement, all fiction was, to borrow a term from chemistry, allotropic. He used to say that on two plots hang 'all the law and the prophets' in story-telling. 'A loves B; B loves A. Hence smooth sailing. A loves B; B loves C. Hence complications.' Our common friend, Canon Isaac Taylor, tackled him one evening at Aldeburgh on the trouble

which all novelists must have in settling the fate of their characters. 'For example, your villains; what do you do with them?'—'Oh, replied Allen, 'we make them into canons!' The story of the stages by which he took 'the downward path' ('the upward path, one may say,' so writes Mr. Andrew Lang, 'judging by many of his excellent stories,') has been told and retold by himself; but, for the completeness of this Memoir, his latest version, given in the Introduction to 'Twelve Tales,' selected by himself, and issued shortly before his death, must be given here:—

'For many years after I took to the trade of author, I confined my writings to scientific or quasi-scientific subjects, having indeed little or no idea that I possessed in the germ the faculty of story-telling. But on one occasion, about the year 1880 (if I recollect aright), wishing to contribute an article to "Belgravia" on the improbability of a man's being able to recognise a ghost as

such, even if he saw one, and the impossibility of his being able to apply any test of credibility to an apparition's statements, I ventured for the better development of my subject to throw the argument into the form of a narrative. I did not regard this narrative as a story: I looked upon it merely as a convenient method of displaying a scientific truth. However, the gods and Mr. Chatto thought otherwise. For, a month or two later, Mr. Chatto wrote to ask me if I could supply "Belgravia" with "another story." Not a little surprised at this request, I sat down, like an obedient workman, and tried to write one at my employer's bidding. I distrusted my own ability to do so, it is true; but Mr. Chatto, I thought, being a dealer in the article, must know better than I; and I was far too poor a craftsman at that time to refuse any reasonable offer of employment. So I did my best, "crassa Minerva." To my great astonishment, my second story was accepted



and printed like my first: the curious in such matters (if there be any) will find them both in the volume entitled "Strange Stories" (published by Messrs. Chatto and Windus) under the headings of "Our Scientific Observations on a Ghost," and "My New Year's Eve among the Mummies."

'From that day forward for some years I continued at Mr. Chatto's request to supply short stories from time to time to "Belgravia," a magazine which he then edited. But I did not regard these my tentative tales in any serious light: and, fearing that they might stand in the way of such little scientific reputation as I possessed, I published them all under the prudent pseudonym of "J. Arbuthnot Wilson." I do not know that I should have got much further on the downward path which leads to fiction, had it not been for the intervention of my good friend the late Mr. James Payn. When he undertook the editorship of the "Cornhill,"

he determined at first to turn it into a magazine of stories only, and began to look about him for fresh blood to press into the service. Among the writers he then secured (I seem to recollect) were Dr. Conan Doyle and Mr. Stanley Weyman. Now, under Mr. Leslie Stephen's editorship, I had been accustomed to contribute to the "Cornhill" occasional papers on scientific subjects: and one morning by an odd coincidence, I received two notes simultaneously from the new editor. The first of them was addressed to me by my real name; in it, Mr. Payn courteously but briefly informed me that he returned one such scientific article which I had sent for his consideration, as he had determined in future to exclude everything but fiction from the magazine—a decision which he afterwards saw reason to rescind. The second letter, forwarded through Messrs. Chatto and Windus, was addressed to me under my assumed name of "J. Arbuthnot Wilson," and begged that un-

known person to submit to Mr. Payn a few stories "like your admirable Mr. Chung." Now, this Mr. Chung was a tale of a Chinese attaché in England, who fell in love with an English girl: I had first printed it, like the others of that date, in the pages of "Belgravia." (Later on, it was included in the volume of "Strange Stories," where any hypothetical explorer may still find it.) Till that moment, I had never regarded my excursions into fiction in any serious light, setting down Mr. Chatto's liking for them to that gentleman's amiability, or else to his well-known scientific penchant. But when a novelist like Mr. James Payn spoke well of my work—nay, more; desired to secure it for his practically new magazine—I began to think there might really be something in my stories worth following up by a more serious effort.

'Thus encouraged, I launched out upon what I venture to think was the first voyage ever made in our time into the Romance

of the Clash of Races—since so much exploited. I wrote two short stories, “The Reverend John Creedy” and “The Curate of Churnside,” both of which I sent to Mr. Payn, in response to his invitation. He was kind enough to like them, and they were duly published in the “Cornhill.” At the time, their reception was disappointing: but gradually, since then, I have learned from incidental remarks that many people read them and remembered them; indeed, I have reason to think that these first serious efforts of mine at telling a story were among my most successful attempts at the art of fiction. Once launched as a professional story-teller by this fortuitous combination of circumstances, I continued at the trade, and wrote a number of tales for the “Cornhill” and other magazines, up till the year 1884, when I collected a few of them into a volume of “Strange Stories,” under my own name, for the first time casting off the veil of anonymity or the cloak of a pseudonym.

In the same year I also began my career as a novelist properly so called, by producing my first long novel, "Philistia."

A re-perusal of the eleven reprinted stories (the twelfth, 'The Churchwarden's Brother,' is 'entirely new, never having appeared in public before on this or on any other stage') shows that if the elementary materials to which the novelist is restricted are few, Allen showed exceptional deftness in the various combinations he effected through them. It also shows with what strenuous unwavering purpose he made fiction the channel of philosophy and science, while not obtruding either to the detriment of interest in the story.

The dozen samples referred to above were chosen, Allen tells us, as illustrating best in different keys the various types of tale to which he devoted himself. In making this selection, he stood outside his work, and took (what few men can take), his own

'parallax' correctly. In 'The Reverend John Creedy,' the keynote is the persistence of atavism, or reversion to the original type; in 'Frasine's First Communion,' it is the morality of the French marriage law in legitimising offspring born before the marriage of their parents; in 'The Child of the Phalanstery,' it is the weeding out of the unfit for the physical and moral wellbeing of the community; in 'The Abbé's Repentance,' it is the dominance of the man over the celibate priest, and the self-sacrifice on fall from ideals opposed to Nature; in 'Wolverden Tower,' it is the old and not yet wholly extinct custom of foundation-sacrifice, or the walling-in of a victim to the disturbed earth-spirit when a building is erected; in 'Janet's Nemesis,' it is the revenge of Nature on woman's neglect or abnegation of her highest function; in 'Langalula,' it is the veneer of the 'converted' negro, and in 'The Curate of Churnside' the veneer of the 'converted' scoundrel; in 'Cecca's Lover,' the

light ethics of the Italian temperament, or the dependence of morals, which is as certain as that of physical constitution, on climate; in 'The Backslider,' the destruction of creed by culture; in 'John Cann's Treasure,' the lust of gain that overreaches itself; in 'Ivan Greet's Masterpiece,' the unattained ideal; and in 'The Churchwarden's Brother,' another psychological study, inherited tendencies being illustrated in a staunch 'pillar of the Church.' In one of his most ingenious novels, 'The Great Taboo,' the savage theory of the soul as an intermittent tenant of the body, of which Mr. Frazer makes suggestive use in 'The Golden Bough,' is the 'motif.' It is handled with great dexterity. In his 'Sign of the Ship' ('Longman's Magazine,' December 1899) Mr. Andrew Lang has an interesting note on 'Kalee's Shrine' (1886), which is described on the title-page as by Grant Allen and May Cotes. He says: 'The germ of the tale was sent to me by a lady, and I suggested her



collaboration with Mr. Allen. There was something of "the supernatural" (which he detested) in the romance, so he cut some nerve or other of the heroine's, and rounded the point in that way, though he knew that he was writing false science. (It was the 'inhibitory nerve' of the heroine's eyelid, the cutting of which had impossible consequences (p. 191).—E. C.) Anything was better than "the supernatural," even a consciously false explanation. For such reasons I used to tell Mr. Allen that he was really as obscurantist as any Inquisitor. He thought that the end (science) justified the means. Once, I think, he did confess to something of this defect in conversation, or perhaps he only "put the question by," as one of the many on which we could never agree. He was a most charming companion, and marvelled much that one could never see the world as he saw it. He would give a little evolutionary lecture, and I would answer, "God is great." There were irreconcilable differences! To

which Mr. Lang adds elsewhere ('Daily News,' 28th October 1899): 'As one born to differ from Mr. Allen in almost every conceivable point, I never could irritate him by opposition, and this I am anxious to record as a proof of the wonderful sweetness of his nature.' But, as his friend Mr. Purcell humorously says: 'To find myself in agreement with Mr. Allen on any question whatever, critical, social, political, would indeed be a painful breach in a friendship which has subsisted for a quarter of a century without one cloud of acquiescence, concession, or retractation on either side. His philosophy I denounce as heretical, yet delight in; it is a pleasure to confound his detestable cut-throat politics; his panaceas for social ills I regard as deadliest poison, yet I would not have him drop them' (Review of 'The Lower Slopes'—'Academy,' 31st March 1894).

The long 'Sturm und Drang' period was now followed by years into which, what-

ever of interruption to work might enter through ill-health and resulting moments of depression ('my right lung will never be quite right,' he says in a letter of June 1880 to Mr. Nicholson), he put an astounding amount of labour. But fiction was, with him, provision of means for higher ends; and, while busy over the short story or the regulation three-volume novel, there was no pause in the pursuit of studies, or in the gathering of facts, bearing on his cherished 'magnum opus'—an 'Inquiry into the Origins of Religions.' Concerning the first (and, as events turned out, the only) instalment of this work, published in 1897 under the title 'The Evolution of the Idea of God,' he says in the preface: 'I have been engaged upon collecting and comparing materials for more than twenty years. I have been engaged in writing my book for more than ten.' Fortunately, as in some degree lightening mechanical labour, his memory was of the

best. Its capacity, contents, and accuracy were such that, as Mr. Le Gallienne says in his charming assessment of the man, the phrase became current whenever any question was seeking answer, 'We must look it up in Grant' ('Fortnightly Review,' December 1899, p. 1007). Between whiles he reports himself to Mr. Nicholson as 'evolutionising for the "St. James's Gazette,"' and a month after that as having undertaken the book on 'Anglo-Saxon Britain,' to which Professor York Powell approvingly refers (p. 32); while there are hints of treatment of other subjects in this letter to Mr. Spencer, written at Lyme Regis 14th September 1880:—

Many thanks for the Appendix to 'First Principles,' which I have read with great interest. Most of the criticisms prove, as you abundantly show, that their authors are really incapable of understanding highly abstract reasoning. It is curious to see how wrong even a man like Leslie goes. I long ago noticed, in talking with ordinary intelligent scholars at Oxford, that they always

accused you of vagueness, and could not see that your carefully guarded abstractness of statement was absolutely necessary in order to cover all the ground of your wide generalisations. They always wanted to use some more concrete expression which would limit your meaning to a part only of its original denotation. The worst of it is, replies of this sort fail to strike any ordinary critic, just because of this necessary limitation of understanding.

May I venture to call your attention to an article of mine in this month's 'Cornhill' on the 'Growth of Sculpture,' which I think will interest you? I have never asked you to read anything of the sort before, because I know how valuable your time is; but I think in this case you would like to do so, as it carries out a few of your conclusions into a special field.—Yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

Allen was no lover of that 'squalid village' London. 'There are those who admire it. . . . For myself, I love better the densely-peopled fields than this human desert, this beflagged and macadamised man-made solitude.' 'Tis a matter about which contention is vain: 'chacun à son goût.' So in 1881 he settled at Dorking, finding among the Surrey hills and vales exhaustless wealth of material, and gathering round him at 'The

Nook' an ever-widening circle drawn to him by a magnetic sweetness and old-world courtesy that disarmed the most prejudiced. And, there, no light attraction and privilege was his in the neighbourhood of Mr. Meredith, who in a letter now before me says: 'You know how highly I prized Grant Allen's literary work, and the warmth of my feeling for him personally.' That love of Nature, with its penetration of many a secret, which suffuses all the work of George Meredith, finding, as it seems to some of us, its fullest expression in his 'Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth' (the title itself is for the 'healing of the nations'), and which, in the talks and gossipy essays of Grant Allen, invested every wayside weed with interest and deep meaning, was a spiritual bond between them, as it is between all who draw the inspiration of life from the Great Mother.

The somewhat relaxing air of Dorking, however, told against him in the winter; and as dryness and sunshine were his breath of

life, he went southwards for a series of years to Algiers, or the Riviera, or Tyrol, or Italy, always 'redeeming the time,' storing up material for novel, or essay on science or art, or for historical guide-book. Here is a dainty little letter from Algiers to his boy. His writing, always marvellously clear, lost none of that virtue when reduced to the 'hand' now reproduced in facsimile.

Sunday.

My own darling Boy,

Daddy doesn't often write to you, I know, but you see that is because he spends so much time writing for you. To-day, however, he has been laid up and unable to work, so he is going to send you, just for fun, the tiniest little letter that ever was written - It's so nice for us to think now that in a very few weeks we shall be back with our darling. We are quite counting the days till that time comes, and making all sorts of plans about what we shall all do next summer together. We were glad you enjoyed your visit to the Hyacinths. Do you know, we met a lady here whom we used to know when you were a tiny baby, the first time we went to Hyères, and she had read the White Man's Foot, and the dedication to you, and was so interested in seeing your photograph. The little figure



who's at this hotel has also got the White Man's  
Foot in a volume of Atlantic, and has read it  
since she's been here. Manning went out with her  
yesterday to pick violets, but Daddy was too ill  
and stopped at home in bed. Today I'm better  
and able to be up. I've been making up a tour  
all morning that I want to take with you and  
Manning in Switzerland next summer, if all goes  
well. Won't that be jolly? Mountains and water-  
falls and steamers and all sorts of fun. Now  
good bye, my birdie. I hope you'll be able to  
read this, for my heart speaks rather

Love your own loving  
Daddy

Although somewhat anticipative, it is convenient to insert here the impression made by him on fellow-sojourners, and this has pleasant record in the following communication from Miss Bird, writing on behalf of her venerable brother, Dr. George Bird, whose friendships embrace a range of time including Leigh Hunt and Algernon Charles Swinburne.

6 Windmill Hill, Hampstead, N.W.

12th Jan., 1900.

Dear Mr. Clodd,—We promised you a few words about our winters at Antibes with Grant Allen. George's hand gets quickly tired, so I write for him. We have no letters of Grant's, and no specimens of his writing, except interesting inscriptions in the books he gave us.

We first went to Antibes in January 1891, tempted there by a letter in the 'Pall Mall Budget' written by Grant Allen, and entitled 'Why not Antibes?' In this letter he sets forth, in tempting colours, the charms of the Cap d'Antibes, 'the long low spit of dull olive grey land projected into the sea between Nice and Cannes.' He gave an outline of the astonishing natural beauties, endless bays, grey rocks, blue sea, snowy Alps, Esterels sunsets, and warmly recommended the Grand Hôtel du Cap, the only hotel on the promontory, as precisely suited to the necessities of 'the sturdy invalid.' On the strength of that letter we went to Antibes, and began an intimate friendship with Grant Allen that was severed only by his death. We spent four winters there; and, although drawn southward by the blue sea and sunshine, the real magnet was Grant Allen. He was the first to discover to us the delights of the place—wild and free, with no obstructive wire barriers, and open to all comers. His letter enticed numerous other sunshine-seekers, and he was always on the alert to do the honours of the enchanted region. Indeed, on these occasions, he had almost proprietary manners! When prevented from doing the honours, he charged George to do them for him. He was eager that the new-

comer should get his first impression from the Light House Hill—an eminence from which the whole panorama of sea and mountain was disclosed to best advantage. And he loved to watch the sunsets from the grey rock-bound garden of Mr. Wyllie—the most beautiful garden in Europe—liberally opened to all comers at stated periods, and, to special friends, never closed.

There was always a sort of tussle as to who should walk with Grant Allen—and no wonder—for could his talks on these occasions have been recorded they would have furnished exquisite new chapters for 'The Evolutionist at Large,' or 'Vignettes from Nature.' He would stop at a rosemary-crowned bank, take out his pocket-knife, and begin to scoop, and from a special spot, to untrained eyes looking a mere grey tangle, he would dig out a cork-shaped portion of earth and show you the nest of a trap-door spider. Or he would suddenly kick away a big stone in his path and reveal the snuggerly of a scorpion; or he would gather a blossom, and handing round his inseparable companion, his pocket lens, would describe with enthusiasm the subtle devices by which at a special moment in its life the expanded blossom compels the visit of the pollen-carrying bee or other insect. His keen eye was always the quickest to discover the first anemone of the spring or the earliest grape hyacinth. He knew exactly not only where to look, but the day of the month on which the opening flower was due. His discourse on natural miracles was permeated to the core by his evolutionist views, making one realise, that to the flower, as to the insect, life is a struggle as ceaseless and inevitable

as it is to human beings. George used to say that if he had a son to educate he should like to give Grant Allen £1000 a year to take the lad a weekly walk in the country. Of course, you know how Grant Allen used to deplore the fact that young people, even those with the so-called highest advantages, are brought up to know next to nothing of the natural marvels that surround them; and he used to get laughed at for saying, 'What a misfortune it is we should let our boys' schooling interfere with their education!' There was nothing in the shape of excitement in the life at Antibes. If we wanted shops or gaieties or gambling, we had to make a journey to Nice or Monte Carlo. But the life at the beautiful Cap, except on rare occasions, sufficed. Almost every day we had a picnic, each person carrying his own simple lunch. Grant Allen never started with us—the morning was the time he gave to work. We named a favourite spot, and when his task was over he and his wife (and his son when there for the holidays) used to join us. The myrtle bushes abounding at the Cap supplied us with perfumed springy couches. It was a favourite trick to walk slowly backwards into these compact wind-cropped masses; and as we crushed our way leisurely down, the air became charged with delicious resinous exhalations. The myrtle bushes were so springy and elastic, that after such apparent rough usage they speedily raised their heads again. Unlike some writers who, in company, are dumb, Grant Allen never spared himself, but always gave the best that was in him, always assuming an interest on the part of the listeners, and always accommodating his talk to the least intelligent among us.

There was one curious thing about him—he never seemed to read. Practically he travelled without books. Certainly he didn't own a dictionary. In his sitting-room at Antibes there was barely a bookshelf, and no sign of 'literature' except the current magazine and newspaper, and perhaps the last new poet. If he did use a book of reference, it was Frazer's 'Golden Bough,' or the 'Flore Française' of Gillet and Magne. This last-named was annotated in his small distinct hand, and the notes ought to be invaluable for any new edition. I have heard him say the best reading in the world was the 'Continental Bradshaw,' and I have seen him sitting for long spells on a journey south, entirely captivated by the problems he found in its pages. But if he could do without books, he could not do without pictures; bare walls froze 'the genial current of his soul'; and he would bring with him autotypes of old masters or send to London for them, to decorate his sitting-room. After the picnic and the walks came the tea, and many a visitor to his many-windowed room will remember the flaming sunsets beyond the Esterels, sunsets so gorgeous that artists declared they were too 'dramatic' for the brush. One of the things that charmed him was the view of Corsica occasionally visible at sunset: he would then rush to friends' rooms and beseech them not to lose a sight so rare and glorious. Evening brought the sociable hour in the big hall of the Cap, or the round game of romps for children, in which he enthusiastically joined. Or there would be a gathering in Grant Allen's room, when the talk would turn on every subject, from the wickedness of ground rents to the merits of the last

new poet. The commonplace and the conventional seemed to vanish in his company, and we loved to follow him into an ideal land where he vividly pictured things not as they are, but as he hoped they might become. At the Antibes Hotel it was natural that the majority he met differed from him, but to dissentients he was invariably gentle and forbearing. And it not unfrequently happened that a sharp opponent, if not converted, would be turned into a respectful listener. The countless letters he received from admirers and sympathisers heartened him and made him feel his pioneer work bore ample fruit. He never deviated from the one great object of his life—‘to make the world accept as a truism in the next generation what it rejected as a paradox in the present generation.’ He had the singular power of reading countenances and diagnosing racial features. He would astonish people by saying, ‘You are a Pict,’ or ‘You come from Devonshire,’ or ‘Your father was French and your mother English’—and he seldom went astray in his definitions. We gave him plenty of opportunity of practising this penetrating and intuitive gift.

We count the day we first met Grant Allen as a festival in our calendar. He seemed to endow his friends with a new set of faculties; and now, years after, we never take our walks abroad without feeling how much we owe to his illuminating talk and inspiring companionship.—Yours affectionately,

Alice L. Bird.

The admirable little volume, entitled ‘Anglo-Saxon Britain,’ in which, following



his bent, the record of political events is subordinated to that of the growth of social institutions, was published in 1881; in the same year a reprint of scientific essays under the title of 'The Evolutionist at Large' was issued, concerning which Darwin wrote:—

I have this minute read the last word of 'The Evolutionist at Large,' and I hope that you will not think me troublesome if I tell you how much the whole has pleased me. Who can tell how many young persons your chapters may bring up to be good working evolutionists! I quite envy you your power of writing—your words flow so easily, clearly, and pleasantly. Some of your statements seemed to me rather too bold; but I do not know that this much signifies in a work of the kind, and may perhaps be an advantage. Several of your views are quite new to me, and seem extremely probable. But I had not intended to scribble so much.

One chief object in my writing has been to ask you, busy as you are, to send me, whenever you can spare time, a 'very few lines,' saying how your health is; for I was grieved to have last winter a very poor account of your health.—Yours sincerely,

CH. DARWIN.

In 1882 another series, entitled 'Vignettes from Nature,' was issued; and remember-



ing that a critic, whose cleverness is qualified by a certain supercilious cocksureness, spoke of Allen as 'occasionally accurate,' it is a satisfaction to have an authoritative answer to that sneer in the following letter:—

4 Marlborough Place, Abbey Road, N.W.,  
2nd May 1882.

Dear Mr. Grant Allen,—Many thanks for your delightful 'Vignettes from Nature.' If Falstaff had been soaked in Evolution instead of sack, I think he might have 'babbled o' green fields' in some such genial fashion. I am not quite sure whether you will take this as a compliment or not; but it is meant for a great one, 'honest Jack'—being, to my mind, a great philosopher.

I have no fault to find on the score of accuracy wherever I have dipped or rambled through your book; on the contrary, I find much to admire in the way you conjoin precision with popularity—a very difficult art.

I hope you will think of what I ventured to suggest about 'Colin Clout's Calendar.' With a few illustrations to help ignorant people to find what they ought to see, I would not wish for a better lure to the study of nature.—  
Ever yours very faithfully, T. H. HUXLEY.

The writer of a memoir should obtrude himself as little as possible, since the

reader is in no wise concerned with him. But the personal note cannot be wholly avoided. And, relating matters in due order, it may be said that although we had corresponded some time previously, Allen and myself did not meet till February 1882. That friendship had its beginning in the knowledge of community of taste in scientific pursuits, and of large, although not complete, agreement on social questions, while its growth into affectionate relationship was fostered by intercourse as frequent as circumstances permitted. To myself it brought advantages beyond my power to reciprocate, because these were derived from contact with an original and suggestive mind, well equipped by a fortunate variety in its training, by singularly acute faculty of observation, and by travel. Among the occasions of close touch with him which memory will cherish are a six-weeks' trip to Egypt in the winter of 1889, and

the Whitsuntide symposia at Aldeburgh from 1882 to 1898, when, with rare break in the record, and then sorely missed, Allen was one of the little party that 'tired the sun with talking, and sent him down the sky.' There was no 'chiel amang us takin' notes' of that talk, which ran so full and fast and free, and the charm of which was in its spontaneity. Always throwing himself into the heart and fun of things, he initiated the custom of electing a laureate of the occasion, the choice more than once, of course, falling on himself. The last poem which he wrote in that capacity was at the gathering in 1896. Hitherto unpublished, it has, perhaps, fit place in this connection for the light and happy way in which he speaks of the friends who forgathered in different years; while the lilt and swing of its graceful stanzas show with what mastery he, who had no ear for music, could handle metre.

## WHITSUN AT ALDEBURGH

What care we at Whitsun, my Clodd,  
For sage Presidential Addresses?  
For Max on each Aryan god,  
Or Lang upon Psyche's caresses?  
What reck we if ages to come  
Forget us, appraise us, or quote us,  
If our fame be sonorous or dumb,  
As we skim on the Alde in the Lotus?

Not a craft with our pinnace can vie!  
On our agile white wings we are passing 'em!  
Yet we Chronicle each as we fly—  
For have we not with us our Massingham?  
'Ho, Sam, for a reef in the sail!'  
We said, with the wind on our quarter!  
'Pray silence! a story from Whale!  
And another, to cap it, from Shorter!'

On the ultramarine of the sky  
Flake-white are the hurrying fleeces:  
Holman Hunt, as you see them float by  
In their infinite airy caprices,  
Has art any daintier tints  
For the humours of Eurus and Notus  
Than the colour that dances and glints,  
As we glide on the Alde in the Lotus?

What whiffs of salt foam on our lips !  
What odours of May and of orris !  
What gossip, as smoothly she slips !  
What tales of Rossetti and Morris !  
What memories cling to her thwarts  
Of speech that of old was not tardy ?  
What nuggets of gold in her quartz—  
Cotter Morison, Meredith, Hardy !

Was it Gissing who sat by me here  
When Du Chaillu discoursed the gorilla ?  
Or Taylor who taught me to steer,  
Ungrazed, 'twixt Charybdis and Scylla ?  
Had Powell some saga to tell,  
Or did Beddard prosect Lepidotus,  
Or Sully lure truth from her well,  
As we lolled on the Alde in the Lotus ?

Bethink you, my host, how at Snape,  
When the sky and the stream were no duller ;  
We moored by a tide-begot cape,  
For Moore to enshrine it in colour ;  
And lo—as the sunset unrolled—  
A shimmering broad El dorado !  
For the mud was as mountains of gold,  
And as Tyrian purple the shadow !

So, still by her gunwale to-day ;  
Ye slaves of the journalist galley,  
'Tis sweet to forget for a day  
The din of the street and the alley,

What matter to you and to me  
That the million outweigh and outvote us,  
If once in a year we are free,  
As we float on the Alde in the Lotus?

In the intervals between writing short stories and scientific essays, the third collection of these last-named being issued in 1883 under the title of 'Colin Clout's Calendar,' Allen was busy over his first long novel, 'Philistia.' After running in serial form through the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' it was published in three volumes in 1884, 'Cecil Power' appearing on the title-page as the author. Allen's motives for the temporary use of 'noms-de-plume'—from 'J. Arbuthnot Wilson' to 'Olive Pratt Rayner'—were, first, the feeling that the writer of serious books and essays who appears under his own name as the writer of sensational stories stands the risk of scant justice from critics; and next, the satisfaction and amusement derived from testing the acumen of the reader in dis-

covering the real author. Generally the ruse was successful, although Richard Proctor (who himself used more than one pseudonym), meeting him at my house soon after our friendship began, charged him with the authorship of 'The Reverend John Creedy,' and Mr. Lang tells us that he also detected Grant Allen under the veil of 'J. Arbuthnot Wilson.'

'Philistia' possesses the interest attaching to all novels into which the autobiographical element enters; and, moreover, it gave larger scope for the conveyance of its author's socialistic views. The following letters, telling of the steps in its preparation, and of Allen's feelings about its reception, may be prefaced by one to Mr. Herbert Spencer, which, though of earlier date, has bearing on the matter:—

Broad Street, Lyme,  
April 17 (1882).

Dear Mr. Spencer,—Many thanks for your kind present of 'Political Institutions.' I have read part of it as it appeared, and shall read the remainder with great interest.



To me it has always seemed that the value of your method and the importance of your results was at least quite as great in the department of human affairs as elsewhere: the dry light of scientific procedure is most wanted where the intellect is most often warped by social prejudices. But it is not astonishing that the Englishmen who hold India and would dragoon Ireland into submission think otherwise.

I am glad to see another instalment of the 'Sociology' fairly completed, and that one of the most necessary ones. Though individual effort can do so very little, it is yet a great thing to have begun the political education of future generations in this way, and to have clearly defined the true tendencies of industrialism. For myself, I have felt always that the 'Study of Sociology,' and the first volume of the 'Principles,' helped me greatly to form my political opinions, and to reject some really anti-industrial and non-individualist communistic views, derived from France and Germany, which I had been inclined to when I first began to think about these things. It is a great point to be clearly shown exactly which of one's aspirations are consistent with one another, and which are mutually destructive. There must be hundreds who, like myself, would probably never have arrived at these generalisations themselves, yet can recognise their truth when presented with the evidence. Even if you only succeed in making those who are already in fibre industrialists better understand the nature of their own creed, and the natural tendencies of their own type, you will have done a great deal. More than that I suppose you hardly expect, at least in the way of practical result.

For my own part, I feel that your writings have often helped to make me choose the right side in doubtful questions, when perhaps if left to my own lights I might have wavered towards the wrong one—especially where current Liberalism has adopted essentially militant methods. Pray excuse this confession of personal adherence; but I sometimes feel as though in political matters you must almost be discouraged; almost be wearied of your task as a voice crying in the wilderness; and every individual attentive hearer is here perhaps worth the numbering. Among so much interested and prejudiced political brawling, I for one am glad to look for argument and convincing demonstration to one calm and unbiassed intelligence. Please don't acknowledge this letter.—Yours very sincerely, GRANT ALLEN.

The Nook, Horsham Road,  
Dorking (1883).

Gentlemen,—Thanks for your note just received. I will try shortly to send you a story for 'Belgravia.'

I write now, however, about a bigger piece of work which I have at present on hand. Mr. James Payn's kind notice of my 'Mr. Chung' in your 'Annual,' and still more of two stories I have since contributed to the 'Cornhill' under his management—'The Backslider' and 'The Reverend John Creedy'—has induced me to set to work upon a three-volume novel, which is now in an advanced stage of preparation (as the circulars say), and will probably be finished before Christmas. Mr. Payn has kindly promised that Smith and Elder will publish it for me on fair terms; but owing to its political tones (it deals with Socialism and

some other pressing questions) he doesn't think he could use it for the 'Cornhill.' I am anxious, however, to get it first published in a magazine, if possible; and if you think there is any probability that you might be able to let it run through 'Belgravia,' I should like to let you have a look at it before closing with his offer. I ought to say that I want it to be published under a pseudonym—I had thought of a lady's name—and that I wish its authorship to be treated as confidential.—Yours very faithfully,

GRANT ALLEN.

Messrs. Chatto and Windus.

TO THE SAME.

(1883.)

Gentlemen,—Thanks for your letter respecting my novel 'Born out of Due Time.' I am glad you are able to accept it for the 'Gentleman's.' The MS. has not yet arrived, but as soon as it does I will go over the earlier part at once, and let you have the first few instalments at the earliest possible date.

As to a pseudonym, I should prefer some other than 'J. Arbuthnot Wilson,' as I wish to keep my authorship of this book quite private. What do you say to 'Cecil Strong' or 'Cecil Force'?—Faithfully yours,

GRANT ALLEN.

The Nook, Dorking (1883).

Dear Mr. Chatto,—Many thanks for your letter of hints about my unfinished novel. 'Philistia' is certainly a very taking title, and I shall be very glad to adopt it. If you

want to announce the novel in your programme for the 'Gentleman's' (as I suppose you will), I think it had better be under that name.

As to not killing Ernest le Breton, I hardly see how one is to get out of it. To me, it seems almost the only possible end. If you feel very strongly that readers won't allow him to be killed, I will try to find some other alternative, but it will be difficult to manage. If one made him recover or get on well in the world, then there would be no 'dénouement,' and, as a matter of character, I doubt whether such a person ever 'would' get on well. However, I shall be guided by you in the matter; and if you think it indispensable that Ernest should live, I will try to work out another conclusion. I intended from the first that Ronald should marry Selah; and if Ernest doesn't die, there is no reason why Lady Hilda shouldn't marry Berkely.

—Yours very faithfully,

GRANT ALLEN.

The Nook, Dorking,  
Friday (1884).

My dear Clodd,—Many thanks for your long and kind critical letter. It is awfully good of you to have taken so much pains about it. I'm afraid I can't conscientiously say I would have done as much myself for any other fellow's novel. Your strictures are exceedingly useful, and very much coincide with James Payn's. As to the fate of Ernest le Breton, however, I am so completely with you that in the story as originally written he did actually die of starvation, or something very like it, and it was vaguely

foreshadowed that Arthur Berkely died, or would marry Edie after a due and decent interval. But Chatto was dead against this melancholy ending, and the actual termination, with its double marriage, was all arranged to meet his views of what the public would imperatively demand in such a situation. So far, I have had three or four reviews, all far more favourable than I could have anticipated, especially as the reviewers were evidently quite unaware that the novel was not by a perfectly new and inexperienced writer.

Pray do not measure my gratitude for your long letter by the shortness of my reply. I am hard at work just at present finishing a 'third' novel, and I have been writing at it all day long to-day until (as you see) my fingers almost refuse to form the letters as I write them. . . .  
—I am ever yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

TO PROFESSOR G. CROOM ROBERTSON.

The Nook, Dorking,  
Feb. 23 (1885).

My dear Robertson,—You spoke so kindly and encouragingly to me yesterday morning that you revived for a moment hopes about my literary and scientific work which I have long myself laid aside. But on soberer second thoughts, I feel almost convinced that it would be best for me not to try writing a really good novel, for I won't succeed. I am content now to make a comfortable living for Nellie and the boy by hackwork. Four or five

years ago I couldn't do that: thanks to you and other kind friends, I can now do it easily. Would it not be a pity by pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp of reputation to endanger my now fairly ensured position as a good sound hack? The fact is, you think (in your goodness of heart) far better of me than I now think of myself. I ought to have told you yesterday that I am profoundly convinced I can never do any work above mediocrity, in the judgment of other people. Of course, I like the work myself (I know I am a bad critic), but it isn't good enough to satisfy real judges.

'Philistia' is to me a great proof of this. I put my whole soul into it. Payn and others encouraged me to think I might write a novel. I fell to with the eager confidence that I was producing a really good work. That confidence and enthusiasm I can never again replace. When it was finished, I felt I had done my utmost. But Payn didn't care for it, and, what was more, even people sympathetic with myself and with the ideas it expressed weren't taken by it. I have put into it my very best, and it's quite clear that the best isn't good enough. I didn't write hastily. I satisfied utterly my own critical faculty, and I can't do any better. Indeed, I can never again do so well. Now, this hasn't at all cast me down or disappointed me. I haven't so much ambition for myself as you are kind enough to have for me. I never cared for the chance of literary reputation except as a means of making a livelihood for Nellie and the boy. I can now make a livelihood easily; and I ought to turn to whatever will make it best. I shall doubtless write more novels, many of which will



hit the public taste better than 'Philistia,' for I am learning to do the sensational things that please the editors. I am trying with each new novel to go a step lower to catch the market. Still, your evident seriousness yesterday has so far prevailed upon me that I think I will really try one novel, following the dictates of my own nature. But what I fear is that not only will it not please the public, but it won't even please you—you who would be so glad to be pleased if only it were possible. I shall hesitate as to whether it is right to throw away upon such a forlorn hope time that might be spent on almost certain money-getting for the needs of the family. Excuse this egotistical letter.—Yours ever, with no end of thanks,

G. A.

Letters of this sort, expressing moods, and, therefore, unstable states of mind, must be taken with some qualification. Allen's strong bent towards science, and the consciousness of what, unhampered, he might have accomplished in it, invited contrasts, causing depression to which his frank, highly-wrought nature gave emphasis both in talk and correspondence. The mood passed, and soon after this he was putting heart and soul into a monograph on Darwin,



which was published in the same year, and about which Mr. Spencer writes as follows :—

38 Queen's Gardens, Bayswater, W.  
22nd Oct. '85.

My dear Allen,—I am much obliged to you for the copy of your little volume contributed to the series of 'English Worthies.' This obligation is, however, small compared with that under which you have laid me by various passages in the volume. Evidently you have striven, and successfully striven, to do justice all round, alike to Darwin's predecessors and to his contemporaries. It is a thing which biographers very rarely attempt to do. They habitually try rather not only to magnify their heroes, but to dwarf or ignore other men.

I have all the more reason to thank you for what you have done in setting forth in various places the relations in which I stand towards the evolutionary doctrine, because it is a thing which I have not been able to do myself, and which none of my friends have hitherto taken occasion to do for me. Of course, the continual misstatements publicly made or implied, I have been, for these five-and-twenty years, obliged to pass in silence; because not only would it have been in bad taste for me to take any overt step in rectification of them, but doubtless by most I should have been regarded with alienated feelings rather than as one who had not been fairly dealt with. Of course, too, it has been out of the question for me to say anything about the matter to those of my friends who well know that a

rectification is needed, and from whom one might fitly have been expected. To you, therefore, as having been the first to make any adequate representation of the state of the case, I feel all the more indebted.

Respecting your volume under its impersonal aspects, I am glad you have furnished so good a sample of what may be distinguished as philosophical biography—biography which deals with its subject as a product not only of family antecedents, but of social antecedents, and traces his development in connection with the influence of his own time. This you have done, I think, very satisfactorily—so satisfactorily, indeed, that I feel myself as now having a very much clearer conception of Darwin's relation to biological science and general thought than I had before. I hope the book will get all the large credit which it deserves.—Very sincerely yours,

HERBERT SPENCER.

The years from 1885 to 1894 have a fairly even record, and may be lightly passed over. 1886 was a busy one, the issues therein comprising 'Kalee's Shrine' (some of the scenes in which are laid at Aldeburgh, described under the name of Thorborough-on-Sea); 'For Maimie's Sake'; 'In all Shades'; 'Flowers and their Pedigrees,' to which last-named reference has been made

by Professor Vines (see p. 77) ; and 'Common Sense Science,' the preface to which is dated from 'Thoreau's Town,' Concord. Allen, with his wife and son, paid a visit to his old home and to the States that year, writing on his return to Mr. Charles Longman under date of September 27th:—

. . . I am back again, much set up in health by my four months' holiday. I have lots of articles in my head for the 'Magazine,' and one of them is now actually in progress. Another, about Concord, where we stopped with the Lothrop's in Hawthorne's house, visited Walden Pond and all Thoreau's haunts, and lived with the memories of Emerson and old John Brown, ought to just suit the taste of your readers. . . .

From 1887 to 1889 the output was mainly in fiction—'The Devil's Die'; 'This Mortal Coil,' etc., and in miscellaneous articles, among these being one in the 'Fortnightly Review' (Vol. XLVI. 1889) entitled 'Plain Words on the Woman Question,' in which Allen ventilated opinions long seething in

his mind; opinions which, as hinted in his letter to Professor Croom Robertson, he was eager to proclaim through the medium of a novel. But four years were to elapse before 'The Woman who Did' was written, and another two years before it was published; stray essays, of the type of 'A Glimpse into Utopia' (reprinted in 'Post-Prandial Philosophy'), in which the main theory of that book was formulated, being, meanwhile, issued to prepare the way before it. The publication of 'Force and Energy' (1888) has been already spoken of, but this further reference gives occasion to note that, here, as in the case of any other book adversely reviewed, Allen did not turn aside to answer his critics. He 'strove with none,' not because, in Landor's arrogant words, 'none were worth his strife,' but because he had learned what is learned soon, or never learned, the barrenness of controversy. Delusions and errors do not perish by debate; they perish under the slow and steady operation of changes to

which they are unable to adapt themselves. The atmosphere, purified of its noxious elements, is life-sustaining to truth alone, and error dies of inanition. For this reason, Allen refused, as a general rule, to have anything to do with propagandist associations. Not long before his death he replied as follows to a request from Mr. Charles Watts for a contribution to the 'Agnostic Annual':—

'I think that thought upon all subjects should be set forth by the ordinary channels; advanced thought only loses by isolation. None but Agnostics read Agnostic reviews, and it is no use trying to convert the already converted. Slow half-hints in the acknowledged organs of thought do far more good in the end. I have never believed in fighting; I believe in permeation.'

An excellent 'counsel of perfection' now the battle is half won; but it is obvious that if advance yet to be secured depended for success upon admission of its views in 'the acknowledged organs of thought,' it would

be considerably handicapped. Most writers, even when avoiding an aggressive tone, and adopting, as 'a more excellent way,' the allusive or suggestive method of conveying their opinions, have, nevertheless, experience of mutilation by editors who, from commercial or timorous motives, truckle to the susceptibilities of illiterate and prejudiced readers. As if any reform was ever instituted, or abuse swept away, without wounding some ignorant or bigoted person's susceptibilities! Allen was for some years a member of the Fabian Society, but this comported with the attitude just indicated, since that organisation, working on the lines of its eponym, plays a waiting game, and supersedes force by persuasion. And, moreover, as will be seen presently, keen as was his interest in the movement, there was growing concentration of thought and energy upon the emancipation of woman in other directions than those at which Socialism primarily aimed.



The Nook, Dorking,  
Aug. 15 (1886).

Dear Mr. Spencer,—Many thanks for your kind present of your pamphlet on Individualism. I have read it all through very carefully, and I think I may say with almost unvarying assent to every proposition it contained. When I turn from the common political writing of the day to your reasoned sociological conclusions, I feel it is like turning from the mediæval verbiage about lightning being due to a conglobation of fulgurous exhalations by a circumfixed humour, to the definite results of modern physics.

The only point where I do not find myself in complete accord (and that is perhaps more due to your comparative silence than to anything else) is that I attach relatively more importance to the initial injustice done by the permitted monopoly of raw material in a few hands. It seems to me that individualism, in order to be just, must strive hard for an equalisation of original condition by the removal of all artificial advantages. The great reservoir of natural wealth that we sum up as land (including mines, etc.) ought, it seems to me, to be nationalised before we can say that the individual is allowed free play. [Allen was a strong supporter of Mr. Alfred Russel Wallace's scheme of Land Nationalisation.] While he is thwarted in obtaining his fair share of raw material, he is being put at a disadvantage by artificial laws. But I daresay if one sets together what you have said in 'Social Statics' and in the 'Principles of Sociology' on this matter, the apparent difference is really minimised. In all other respects I think your book carries



the profoundest conviction, and helps to keep one up against the advancing phalanx of meddlesomeness.

Excuse my writing at such length; but I know you expect only to influence an individual citizen here and there, and I believe you like to hear that a few such are actually helped on by what you have written.—Yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

A land nationaliser, yet buying an acre or two for his house and garden, and speculating in an acre or two more; an unbeliever, yet willing to take the oath by the 'help' of God in a court of justice; a perfervid advocate of the independence of man and woman in all the relations of life, yet the most devoted of husbands; an opponent (the case was argued between him and Prince Kropotkin at my house) of the destruction of monuments and buildings, however shameful the deeds associated with them, Allen was from early manhood till death a soul in revolt against conventions that dwarf and corrupt, and against political and economic conditions that enslave. The sense of unity and continuity which is the

outcome of acceptance of the theory of evolution explains why he was content to watch the slow grinding of the mills of progress, and also why, when it was now and again suggested that he should make some bold stroke for freedom, he would humorously say, 'You forget that I was brought up in the family of a clergyman of the Church of England.' If, therefore, he refused to take any active part in movements which had his sympathy, this was not because he lacked courage, but because experience and reading of the past had taught him to leave the betterment of things to the disintegrating effects of time. Here it may be opportune to print a few sentences from Herbert Spencer's 'First Principles,' which were Allen's favourite quotation from that book:—

Whoever hesitates to utter that which he thinks the highest truth, lest it should be too much in advance of the time, may reassure himself by looking at his acts from an impersonal point of view. Let him duly realise the fact that opinion is

the agency through which character adapts external arrangements to itself—that his opinion rightly forms part of this agency—is a unit of force, constituting, with other such units, the general power which works out social changes; and he will perceive that he may properly give full utterance to his innermost conviction, leaving it to produce what effect it may. It is not for nothing that he has in him these sympathies with some principles and repugnance to others. He, with all his capacities, and aspirations, and beliefs, is not an accident, but a product of his time. He must remember that while he is a descendant of the past, he is a parent of the future; and that his thoughts are as children born to him, which he may not carelessly let die. He, like every other man, may properly consider himself as one of the myriad agencies through whom works the Unknown Cause; and when the Unknown Cause produces in him a certain belief, he is thereby authorised to profess and act out that belief. For, to render in their highest sense the words of the poet:—

‘ —Nature is made better by no mean,  
But nature makes that mean; over that art  
Which you say adds to nature, is an art  
That nature makes.’

Not as adventitious therefore will the wise man regard the faith which is in him. The highest truth he sees he will fearlessly utter; knowing that, let what may come of it, he is thus playing his right part in the world—knowing that if he can effect the change he aims at—well; if not—well also; though not ‘so’ well (p. 123).

In acknowledging Mr. Edmund Gosse's 'Life' of his father, Philip Henry Gosse, a naturalist of deservedly high repute in a past generation, Allen wrote:—

Cookham Dean, July 7, 1896.

My dear Gosse,—Many thanks for your kind present of your father's 'Life,' and also for the flattering inscription you have put in it. I am now engaged in reading it, and find, as I anticipated, that it is a most interesting and apparently faithful portrait of a most fascinating personality. The very traits which would deter some readers amuse and attract me; for I have never cared (born rebel that I am) for the great organisations; it is the man who, in religious thought or in science, strikes out a line for himself that appeals to my sympathies. Your father's marked and intense individuality takes my fancy much, and I expect to get many useful hints for character from your excellent Memoir.

—Yours very sincerely, GRANT ALLEN.

The admiration which Allen thus expresses was the more sincere because Mr. Gosse's 'individuality' took the shape of adherence to the exclusive tenets of the sect known as 'Plymouth Brethren,' which would have stood 'four square to all the

winds that blow ' against so irreverent and daring a creed as Allen put into mellifluous and noble verse for recital at a dinner of the Omar Khayyám Club a few evenings before he penned the foregoing letter :—

## OMAR AT MARLOW

Too long have we dallied, my Omar, too long,

With metres austere and iambic :

A rapider measure I ask for my song,

Anapæstic, abrupt, dithyrambic.

The reddest of roses my locks shall entwine,

And—ho there ! Luigi or Carlo !

A beaker this way of the ruddiest wine

That lurks in the cellars of Marlow !

Is it chance, is it fate, that has guided our crew

To a nook by the eddying river,

Where Shelley gazed down upon ripples that woo,

And rushes that listen and quiver ?

He loved not to look on the wine as it flows

Blood-red from the flagon that holds it ;

Yet who could so pierce to the soul of a rose

Through the chalice of bloom that enfolds it ?

Not as he, not as he, was the Seer of the East,

The Master and Mage that we follow ;

He knew, as he smiled on the amorous feast,

That the world—and the wine-cup—are hollow ;

But he knew that the Power, high-sceptred above,  
Is more than the anchorite spectre ;  
That the world may be filled with the greatness of love,  
And the wine-cup with roseate nectar.

No saint—and no sot—was Omar, I wis,  
But a singer serene, philosophic ;  
For Philosophy mellows her mouth to a kiss  
With each step she takes toward the tropic.  
Pale gold is the grain in the vats of the north ;  
Lush purple thy grape, Algeciras ;  
And the creed that is cold by the mists of the Forth  
Glows pink in the gardens of Shiraz.

Of fate and foreknowledge, of freedom and doom,  
He sang ; of the bud and the blossom ;  
Life, whirled in a flash from its birth to its tomb ;  
Death, gathering all in his bosom ;  
Of Allah, who, cloaked by the World and the Word,  
Still veils his inscrutable features ;  
Of man, and his debt to his Maker and Lord ;  
Of God, and his debt to his creatures.

A rebel our Shelley ! a rebel our Mage !  
That brotherly link shall suffice us ;  
'Tis in vain that the zealots, O Prophet and Sage,  
From his creed—and from thine—would entice us ;  
We seek not to stray from the path that ye trod ;  
We seek but to widen its border ;  
If systems that be are the order of God,  
Revolt is a part of the order.

But whither, oh, whither, my petulant Muse,  
To heights that outsoar and surpass us ?  
Not thine to be sprent with ineffable dews  
On perilous peaks of Parnassus ;  
Leave loftier themes of the fortunes of man  
To our orient's occident herald,  
Who grafted a rose of thy stock, Gulistan,  
Upon English sweetbriar—Fitz-Gerald !

These three be the tutelar gods of our feast,  
And, to-night, 'twere a sin to divide them ;  
Two bards of the West, and a bard of the East,  
With one spirit to quicken and guide them.  
So Luigi or Carlo, a beaker again,  
This way, of your liveliest Pommard !  
We 'll drink to a trio whose star shall not wane—  
Here 's Shelley, Fitz-Gerald, and Omar !

The six-weeks' trip to Egypt in November till mid-December 1889 gratified Allen's long-cherished desire to see a country whose monuments interested him chiefly for their religious significance. The journey had its drawbacks, partly on account of anxiety about Mrs. Allen's health, and partly because of the repulsive sides of Eastern life—the dirt, the squalor, and the



mendicancy. But Allen never regretted a visit which he had no desire to repeat, and which yielded a store of material confirming him in the ghost-theory of the origin of religion learned at the feet of Mr. Herbert Spencer. The value of that material was enhanced because the conclusions to which it pointed seemed to him to fall into line with those reached by Mr. Frazer in his 'Golden Bough,' a book which influenced Allen profoundly. Agile in acting on any hint, he made, as has been already stated, the central idea of that work the plot of one of his best stories, 'The Great Taboo'; but Mr. Frazer's influence is seen in more sober directions, as in the translation of the 'Attis' and the 'Evolution of the Idea of God.' That he had aptly learned to do 'the sensational things that please the editors' is shown not so much in the 'Tents of Shem' (1891), wherein some Algerian experiences are utilised, as in his coming out the winner of the thousand

pounds prize offered for a novel by the proprietors of 'Tit-Bits.' Most of his writings, from a certain sprightliness and note of aggressiveness, brought him numbers of approving or protesting letters, rarely, it is probable, letters of the following laughter-moving type, which may have been penned by the individual who, on hearing the announcement of a lecture on Keats, asked, 'What are Keats?' For charity's sake, the writer's name and address (a West-end one) are withheld:—

Oct. 15, 1892.

Dear Sir,—Pardon the liberty I am taking. In your clever story of 'The Great Ruby Robbery' you mention Browning being splendid for the nerves. Is there such a thing, would you give me the address to obtain. I am a dreadful sufferer of nervousness, under such circumstances you will accept my apology for troubling.—Yours faithfully,

\* \* \*

GRANT ALLEN, Esq.,

'Strand Magazine' Office,  
Southampton Street.

'What's Bred in the Bone' (1891)  
called forth a host of petitions for  
loans (always temporary!) from less for-

tunate brethren and sisters of the craft, compliance with which would have cleared his pockets of thrice the sum paid him. More agreeable letters followed the issue of his daring, and, in the judgement of a majority of critics, successful translation of the 'Attis' (1892), 'the greatest poem in the Latin language . . . the finest flower of the Celtic genius infiltrated by the mystic and mysterious charm of the Oriental imagination.' (Allen had already suggested, in a footnote to 'Physiological Æsthetics,' that Catullus was a Celt.) In this venture, the classical scholar, the poet, and the anthropologist, were manifest, but it is to the last-named that the motive of the translation is due. In an essay which follows the text and translation, Frazer's 'Golden Bough' is dexterously worked into the argument of the chapters of Herbert Spencer's 'Principles of Sociology,' wherein the ghost-theory is formulated. All gods, it is argued, were originally ghosts,

and ghosts, as the spirits of dead ancestors, supply the 'germ-plasm' of religion. The prevalence of belief in tree-gods is explained by the planting of trees on graves, the ghosts of the buried passing into the trees: hence, too, the probable origin of cultivation, the grave being the earliest place sown with seeds. To those who regard ancestor-worship as a secondary stage in the evolution of religion, the argument will remain as unconvincing as it does to Mr. Frazer and Mr. Andrew Lang (who, by the way, are as much at issue with Professor Max Müller and his school as is Mr. Spencer); while to Mr. Herbert Spencer it supplies a missing link in his chain of facts. It is an advantage that the following letters from these several authorities (by whose permission they are here printed) were found among Allen's papers:—

62 Avenue Road, Regent Park, N.W.,  
26th Nov., 1892.

My dear Allen,—I shall really begin to think there is some value in classical erudition, considering the use you

are putting it to. Would that most men who have familiarised themselves with ancient superstitions knew as well what to do with them!

Thanks both for the book and for its contents. I really feel personally indebted to you for strengthening so admirably the ghost-theory. You have supplied a link which was wanting; for although I have given reasons for the belief that the tree-worship was really the worship of the inhabiting spirits, yet there lacked all explanation of the way in which there arose the idea of inhabitation. This you have supplied in a most conclusive manner. Not that you will convince Max Müller and Co. Men in their position are beyond the reach of reason. I suppose you are away in the sunny south, where I should very much like to be with you, could I get there.—Sincerely yours,

HERBERT SPENCER.

Trinity College, Cambridge,  
28th November 1892.

My dear Sir,—Allow me to thank you for the kind present of the 'Attis,' and for the more than kind dedication which accompanied it. I confess it gave me pleasure, though I cannot quite accept the position of authority in which you would seem to place me. I regard most or all of my own speculations on primitive religion as provisional, and likely to be replaced by truer views when the facts of savage life are more fully known. Hence I hold them very lightly myself, and wish that others would do so too.

Your translation of the 'Attis' seems to me admirable. It catches the spirit and flavour of the original, and there

is a fine rush and sweep in the flow of the metre. I have read with interest your instructive essay on the Origin of Tree-worship, but I cannot say that I am convinced by it. You seem to reject the theory of animism, and to hold that the only spirits in which primitive man believes are the ghosts of his ancestors. I, on the contrary, accept the theory of animism as established. Primitive man, it seems to me, instinctively attributes conscious life to all or to most inanimate objects, quite apart from any idea that the ghosts of his ancestors are about, and may be in those objects. In particular, he supposes that striking natural objects, such as the sun, rapid rivers, great rocks, and tall trees, are the abode or the embodiment of powerful spirits whom it is desirable to propitiate. This instinctive belief, it appears to me, is quite sufficient to account for tree-worship, sun-worship, stone-worship, etc., and it is, in my opinion, a mistake to attempt to resolve these and all other forms of primitive worship (as you seem to do) into ancestor-worship. At the same time, I agree with you so far that I believe ancestor-worship, or the fear of ghosts, to have been on the whole the most important factor in the evolution of religious belief. This view is perfectly consistent with attributing, as I attribute, great though subordinate importance to tree-worship, sun-worship, etc., and with holding that these latter worships have roots independent of ancestor-worship. But I am only re-stating the old theory of animism, which you have apparently discarded. To show you that I have not wholly overlooked the importance of the primitive ghost, at least in some of his aspects, I send you a copy of a paper on Burial Customs which I wrote some years



ago ['On Certain Burial Customs as Illustrative of the Primitive Theory of the Soul.'—'Journal of the Anthropological Institute,' August 1885].

Again thanking you for your book, and for the very kind terms in which you speak of my work, I am, yours very truly,

J. G. FRAZER.

GRANT ALLEN, Esq.

Northcliff, St. Andrews, Fife,  
Nov. 24 (1892).

Dear Allen,—I have written a useless little notice of your book on Trees [the reference is to a leader on the 'Attis' in the 'Daily News,' 28th Nov. 1892], which comes to 'this, that it needs an encyclopædic study of burial customs (many of which give vegetation no chance, as cave-burial) and of tree-worship, before one can accept your hypothesis. In one remark of Macdonald's [the Rev. Duff Macdonald's 'Africana,' of which Allen made considerable use] he seems to make against your view; they do worship under a tree—if not, they erect a shade. That is, 'shade' is what they want in that climate, and a tree comes cheapest. By every old bower, cottage, hall, or ruined site, you'll find an ash. Ancestral spirit? Not much; a Scots Act of Parliament ordered them to be planted for spear-shafts.

The various Greek gods 'dendritis' need looking up, I think. My own opinion is that trees were worshipped for all sorts of different reasons, yours among them very likely. There is a good instance in Kohl. Boilyas live in a tree, let us say, you think because it grows above a grave. Perhaps, or perhaps just because it is comfortable quarters,



as Charles II. and Gordon of Earlston discovered. Or is it an arboreal survival? This might be easily and plausibly maintained. The fact is one lifetime would hardly be enough for a thorough study of tree-worship alone, and Liddell and Scott would be a trifle to the space needed. I have not the books nor the spirits for an investigation. I hardly know a trochee from an iambic, but I fancy you are right on the metre.—Yours very truly,

A. LANG.

Mr. Lang tells me that 'the reference in Kohl meant this. A Red Indian more or less revered a certain tree, not as connected with ancestor-worship, but because it once curtseyed to him.'

The following letter makes brief reference to the foregoing, and throws a glimpse on Allen's life abroad at this period:—

Hôtel du Cap, Antibes,  
Feb. 18, (1893).

My dear Clodd,—For weeks I have been going to write to you, but somehow time failed; and yesterday it was quite a pleasure to us both to see your dear handwriting once more. . . .

For ourselves, nothing very startling in any way has happened to us. We have had perhaps a less interesting group of visitors on the whole this year than oftenest falls to us; but even so, we have had dear Dr. Bird, who is always delightful,

and his sister, who is almost more so; not to mention Spender of the 'Westminster Gazette' and his mother; Saunders, the Radical member; and Clark, the Crofter man who sits for Caithness—both accompanied by wives who added to the gaiety of the hotel; while a pretty girl or two has appeared as an oasis in the desert of old maids to lighten our darkness. (This confusion of metaphors clearly betrays my Irish origin.) We remain here till the fifth of March, and then go on to Florence. Thither, the Birds will accompany us. Thence, I go on to Rome, but it is not yet decided whether dear Nellie will go with me, or remain in Florence, or take a middle course and stop at Frascati or Albano. I am mugging up my Baedeker in anticipation, but I confess the vastness of all there is to see rather appals me. I wish you could have been there with me. Sightseeing is so much pleasanter when one does it with somebody else whose tastes are similar.

Of literary news I have very little. I have done hardly any work this winter, and the little I have done has not yet appeared. I like my articles for the 'Westminster Gazette' [these were reprinted under the title 'Post-Prandial Philosophy'], but I don't know how long the Editor will permit me to speak my mind out with such comparative freedom. I had most interesting letters about the 'Attis' from a great many folklorists—amongst others Jacobs, whom I have never had time to answer. Will you kindly tell him, if you see him, that my silence is not due to intentional rudeness, but to sheer inability. Even with the aid of my typewriter, I find it hard to get through all I have to do in the twenty-four hours. A man who would

invent a day of forty-eight would be conferring a great benefit on suffering humanity. And yet, when one comes to think how tired one is at the end of the existing day, any addition to it would be rather terrible to contemplate. . . .

Love to all from both, my dear fellow. If our house is finished next spring, you must sometimes run down and rest with us from a Saturday to Monday.—In haste, ever yours most affectionately,

GRANT ALLEN.

The question of removing to a more bracing place than Dorking had often been mooted, longing eyes being cast upon Hind Head, whose 'radiating spurs are perfumed with the aromatic resins of garrulous pine-woods.' There Allen built a charming cottage on the 'Hilltop' overlooking the Devil's Punch-bowl, removing thither in 1893. The change justified itself, because it enabled him thenceforth to remain in England in the winter, and to be free for trips abroad in the spring, when the brighter and longer days could be utilised for visits to the renowned art galleries, whose contents are described in his, unhappily, incomplete series of 'Historical Guides.' Perugia

does not appear among the places named in the foregoing letter, but it was there that in the spring of 1873, to quote from a prefatory note, he wrote, 'for the first time in my life wholly and solely to satisfy my own taste and my own conscience,' 'The Woman who Did.' Before, however, sending, as Mr. Andrew Lang calls it, 'his message in the matter of Ethics to the world and town' from the Hilltop, Allen tarried on the 'Lower Slopes' to issue, under that title, a volume of verse, 'Reminiscences of Excursions round the Base of Helicon, undertaken for the most part in early manhood.' In the crowd of minor poets, with plenty of voice, but in some cases not much to sing about, the statelier, more subdued, and reflective note of Allen's verse caught the ear of only a few. But it has, like all his work, elements that arrest and interest; it has the distinction of a certain inevitableness; the themes are serious; the feeling is deep and genuine. Content is reached only through

discontent, and the 'motif' of the volume (which, by the way, has one poem, 'In Coral Land,' worthy of a place in every anthology of light verse) is not so much in the restatement of the old question of the subjectivity of the universe, as in the majestic stanzas 'In Magdalen Tower'; nor in the group on Evolution, from the fantastic 'ballade' to the lines to Mr. Spencer, as in five poems, from 'In the Night Watches' to 'Sunday Night at Mabile,' which are the outcome of Allen's burning wrath at Society's heedless sacrifice of woman for her sister's virtue. This is shown in the following letter:—

12th Feb. '94.

My dear Stead,—I am sending you my little volume of verses. There are three pieces in it I very much wish you to read. Those three pieces are called 'In the Night Watches,' 'Passiflora Sanguinea,' and 'Mylitta.' If you read those three, I don't care about the rest of them.

There are two men in England really in earnest about the horrible slavery of prostitution. You are one, and I am the other. Don't condemn without reading. Read those three, and then read 'Sunday Night at Mabile,' and

if you don't agree with me, at least you will feel we are working together towards the same aim, no matter by what diverse and seemingly opposite methods.—Yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

Judging from existing materials, there was no considerable bulk from which to select; but among the poems, copies of which, as has been remarked, Allen placed in the custody of Mr. Franklin Richards, is one more personal than those published, which before passing from further reference to 'The Lower Slopes' may have record here:—

### LA DAME AUX CAMÉLIAS

(To Alexandre Dumas, fils.)

One book of yours I keep where'er I roam,  
 Prophet and friend and teacher, dear Dumas,  
 A dog's-eared, thumb-marked, paper-covered tome,  
 'La Dame aux Camélias.'

It lies upon my table day and night,  
 For sober English friends to eye askance  
 In pious awe the tale whose witching sleight  
 Corrupted godless France.

But little heed I if they blame or praise,  
For round that book sweet souvenirs entwine :  
I keep it for a memory of the days  
When Maimie first was mine.

In those bright hours of newly-wedded love  
Maimie and I on many a summer noon  
Sat with one book between us where the grove  
Slopes toward the tumbling Rhône.

Fast rose the silent tears, and hotly fell,  
Till every drop in both our eyes was dried  
Over the sacred page whose sad words tell  
How Marguerite Gautier died.

And later when my Maimie's cheek was pale,  
And weak her failing voice and low her breath,  
And in her bloodless hands we read the tale  
Of slowly creeping death,

Yet would she often raise her heavy head  
To fix upon my face a tearful glance,  
And whisper, ' Read me from the book we read  
Long, long ago, in France.'

And now my Maimie cheers my heart no more ;  
Her face is only with me in my dreams ;  
But every little word she loved of yore  
To me thrice sacred seems.



And so, where'er my lonely steps may roam,  
Prophet and friend and teacher, dear Dumas,  
I thank you for that paper-covered tome,  
'La Dame aux Camélias.'

'Mylitta' and its allied group, together with articles of the type of the 'New Hedonism' ('Fortnightly Review,' October 1894), were preludes to a concrete and dramatic presentment of Allen's views in 'The Woman who Did.' But writing a book is one thing, and getting it published is another. And when the publishers would have none of it, it seems that Allen, whose feelings were then at fever heat, threatened to destroy the manuscript, whereupon his old friend Nicholson offered to take it into the immortal custody of the Bodleian. Allen replied :—

Thanks for your flattering suggestion. But on reflection I'll adopt a middle course. I'll keep the MS. during my lifetime, and ask my wife to pass it on to you after my departure from a planet which I shall have scanty cause to remember with gratitude.

But, finally, Mr. John Lane agreed to

issue it, and so in 1895 the defiant book was launched with the inscription already quoted : 'To my dear Wife ; to whom having dedicated my twenty happiest years, I dedicate also this brief memorial of a less fortunate love.'

On the fly-leaf of the copy which Allen sent me, he wrote 'This my Evangel,' and it was with the ardour of a Paul or a Francis Xavier that he proclaimed his gospel of freedom between man and woman in all their relations as the basis of a higher morality. The plot had no great element of novelty ; and there were passages in the book which furnished another illustration that the conviction of a mission is fatal to the play of humour. But the seriousness of aim was beyond question. The late Bishop Magee, in a debate on the liquor traffic in the House of Lords, declared, in brave and memorable words, that he would 'rather see England free than sober' ; and, in like spirit, Allen declared that he would

rather see England free than moral; i.e. that he would rather have sex relations unfettered than bound by conventions which involved woman's degradation. Better, he contended, a society of free, healthy mothers than of enslaved prostitutes; a society in which woman should not only be at liberty, but encouraged, to 'develop equally every fibre of her own nature' than one exhibiting the spectacle of a smug world winking complacently at the 'substitution of prostitution for marriage through the spring-tide of manhood.' With the recognition that, under certain circumstances, marriage is dissoluble, the old theory of its sacramental character vanishes. But the State says, 'You must be immoral if you would be divorced,' and it remains for the Legislature to enlarge the reasons warranting divorce, so that anomalies, such e.g. as the refusal of release to couples having a common desire for freedom, may be abolished. In Allen's view, however, concessions of this sort were only

for 'the present distress,' and ignoring these, he passed to attack the policy of the 'advanced' women who, clamouring for political status and larger share in the pursuits of men, threw contempt on that maternity, 'not to desire which should be a woman's shame. . . . Whether we have wives or not — and that is a minor point about which I, for one, am supremely unprejudiced—we must at least have mothers'; and to encourage repression of appetites which, next to hunger, are the most imperious of our needs, is to contribute to the deterioration of the race, and to the extinction of the best types of the race. In view of woman's supreme and special functions, Allen argued that 'life should be made as light and easy and free for her as possible,' the care and support of herself and offspring being, in the last resort, a charge upon the community. As hereafter shown, he insisted that the adoption of his views involved neither abolition of monogamy nor promiscuous intercourse, but

tended, through the exercise of a cultured freedom, and a deepening sense of common responsibilities, to more assured permanence of relations.

During long centuries, and Christianity has much to answer for in the matter, the sexual has been treated as opposed to the moral. Life, in Stoic phrase, 'according to nature,' has been restrained and tabooed by artificial codes of ethics, and, hence, suppression has produced its inevitable results in pruriency and nameless vices. And, to-day, things go on in the old blind, blundering fashion; the best-intentioned seeking what is called 'the promotion of public morality' by clearing the streets and filling the music-halls, instead of striking at the taproot of the infamy, namely, the selfish economic conditions by which even some among these best-intentioned (let it be hoped, unwittingly) profit, but which drive women on 'the town,' and prevent men from marrying early.

Matthew Arnold, quoting Henri Martin, describes the Celt as 'always ready to react against the despotism of fact'; and in his treatment of the marriage question, the Celtic element in Allen would appear to have had unrestricted play. The economic obstacles troubled him but slightly; his enthusiasm obscured the enormous complexity of the problem. For human nature being what it is, with still remote approach to expulsion of 'the ape and tiger,' the effectiveness of his scheme must always be limited to the narrow zone where lofty conceptions of sex relations and of mutual obligation prevail. There will doubtless be drastic changes in our marriage laws within no very remote period; but a survey of the past, and a wide outlook on the present, give little encouragement to Allen's hope that civilised mankind, to say nothing of barbarous peoples, will ever wholly displace an institution which, however based on illogical compromises, further evidences how in the



moral, as in the material sphere, evolution is adaptation and adjustment.

But although ideals may be impracticable, approximation to them should none the less be striven after, and those at which Allen aimed are towards the freeing of the spirit from the bondage of the flesh. As George Meredith finely says: 'The difference between appetite and love is shown when a man, after years of service, can hear and see and admire the possible, and still desire in worship. . . .' Then there is 'a new start in our existence, a finer shoot of the tree stoutly planted in the good, gross earth; the senses running their live sap, and the minds companioned, and the spirits made one by the whole-natured conjunction. In sooth, a happy prospect for the sons and daughters of Earth, divinely indicating more than happiness; the speeding of us, compact of what we are, between the ascetic rocks and the sensual whirlpools, to the creation of certain nobler races, now very dimly im-



agined' ('Diana of the Crossways,' chap. xxxvii. p. 338, Edition 1885).

Allen had no illusions as to any immediate fulfilment of his ideal, nor as to its embodiment in the exact shape which he designed. He did not even urge the experiment upon those who seemed willing to make it. 'No man or woman,' he says, 'can go through life in consistent obedience to any high principle. We must bow to circumstance.' As for what follows :—

We have no share in the soil  
Whereto we have led our heirs ;  
We have borne the brunt of the toil,  
But the fruit is theirs.  
For the vineyards are goodly and wide,  
And more than a man may count ;  
But our graves shall be on the side  
Of the Moabite mount.

His words on the marriage problem have added weight in the fact that his own domestic life was of the happiest ; the love of wife knowing no change, save that it

ripened with the years, while zest in all to which he put his hand was quickened by the hopes wrapped up in the future of his boy. However, the world knew little of this, and believed the worst that it heard. It argued that a man who attacked the institution of marriage and defended free love must be a libertine; it declared that his separation from his wife was notorious, whereas the fact is that he was never happy on the rare occasions that he was away from her. When an 'interview' with Allen, published in an evening paper, closed with the words, 'He is happily married'; the compositor soothed his doubts by thus punctuating it: 'He is, happily, married.'

'The innumerable array of anæmic and tailored persons who occupy the face of this planet with so much propriety' (the words are Robert Louis Stevenson's) had their stale and stock prejudices consulted, as usual, by the majority of the press in its reception of 'The Woman who Did.'

In the case of a widely-circulated newspaper the book was sent to Mr. Coulson Kernahan, with a request that he would 'cut it up' and the author also. Mr. Kernahan says: 'I told the editor that I would see him further before I'd join the cowardly cur-pack that yelped at such a man. There was a great deal in the book from which I personally dissented, but the spirit of it, and the courage and sincerity of it, I certainly sympathised with.' Mr. Stead, to whom Allen had sent a set of advance proofs, published a summary of the story, with copious extracts, in the 'Review of Reviews' (March 1895), because he believed 'that the book was its own best antidote.' But the monopolists of the bookstalls in Ireland refused to sell the serial, declining, as they informed Mr. Stead, 'to be made the vehicle for the distribution of attacks upon the most fundamental institution of the Christian State.' By the courtesy of Mr. Stead, the

article in the 'Review of Reviews' was sent in proof to Allen through his nephew, and elicited the following letter :—

The Croft, Hind Head, Haslemere,  
Wednesday.

My dear Grantie,—I return herewith the whole of the proofs, about which I have no suggestion to make, save one verbal correction. Of course, as a matter of business, I am glad to have so good an advertisement; but I confess, so far as the personal effect upon Stead is concerned, I am a little disappointed to have effected so little. I hoped for more acquiescence, once my position was clear, and my eager desire for a higher ideal of life made evident. It is strange to me that a man who has been so much misunderstood and misrepresented himself should have no greater fellow-feeling for another, equally misconceived by the general public. 'Thought,' said John Stuart Mill, 'will always sympathise with thought.' I had hoped that earnestness would also always sympathise with earnestness. And how strange that he should miss the point that I am the first person to plead that the question of the child is the key of the situation! I have for the first time in the world's history invented the conception of parental responsibility, and my first reviewer positively accuses me of overlooking and ignoring it! I rubbed my eyes as I read; surely, thought I, he must be speaking of some other person! Is not the whole gist of the book its passionate appeal against promiscuity, its insistence upon the fact that we have no

right to disregard the dictates of parental responsibility, to become or refuse to become parents under the impulse of impure or unworthy motives, but simply because this man or that woman is or is not the one pointed out to us as the proper father or mother of our children? I confess the whole review bewildered me; it sounded like the review of some other man's book who had been maintaining the exact opposite of my own propositions. However, I mustn't run on. I'm afraid Stead is unconsciously becoming the greatest bulwark of the institution of prostitution; but go it will, all the same, and 'The Woman who Did' is the first shot fired in the war against it.

Forgive warmth, I don't often flare up like this, but the subject has made me hot and excited. Use your own discretion whether you show this letter to Stead or not. You know him better than I do, and you know how he is likely to take a burst of righteous emotion. — Affectionately yours,

G. A.

'Hot and excited'; that was his state of mind for some time after the issue of a book on which, as he said in a letter to me, he 'had staked his all.' He adds: 'If it fails to boom, I go under for ever. I hope, therefore, you will talk about it to your friends, no matter how unacquiescently. It is a serious crisis for me, and

only a boom will ever pull me through.' The sequel shows that he greatly exaggerated the effect of the publication of the book upon his future work, although for about a year the 'Woman who Did' and 'The British Barbarians' made a less ready market for his wares; and if (which is doubtful) these books cost him any old friendships, they secured him many sympathising tributes from strangers. In contrast to these there came this note from a clerical acquaintance evoking a dignified reply, of which, fortunately, a copy was found among Allen's papers.

\* \* \* 30th Dec. (1895).

Sir,—I feel that I ought to let you know that it is a great distress to me to be unable to ask you to my house, or to hold intercourse with you. But this is impossible while you treat my Divine Master as you are doing. And I cannot forget the Apostle's command: 'If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine (the doctrine of Christ), receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed. For he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds' (2 John x. 11).—Yours sincerely,

\* \* \*

New Year's Day, 1896.

Dear Sir,—I thank you for your candid and honest letter. So far as I am concerned, I do not think it was necessary for you to write it. No man is bound to know another, or to give any reason why he does not know him. The slight acquaintance that has existed between us might therefore have died out naturally without the need for a formal explanation.

As you have been at the trouble to write, however, I cannot but acknowledge and answer your letter. Let me say then at once that I respect you far more for it than I can respect those who do not so fully act up to their convictions. For my own part, I am ready to form acquaintances with all men who honestly desire to live justly and rightly; but then, I have no positive command laid upon me, as you have; nor would I accept the command of any master, even an omnipotent one, unless it commended itself to my own conscience. I recognise that you are acting in accordance with principle, and I readily admit that, thinking and believing as you do, no other course is open to you.

Dare I venture to add one line of explanation as to my own standpoint? To me, the first religious duty of man consists in the obligation to form a distinct conception for himself of the universe in which he lives and of his own relation to it. He ought to satisfy himself what he is, whence he comes, and whither he goeth. In matters of such fundamental importance, he ought not to rest content with any second-hand or hearsay evidence. He ought not



to believe whatever he is told, but to search the universe, in order to see whether these things are so. Many years of study, historical, anthropological, scientific, and philosophical, have convinced me that the system of the universe which you accept as true is baseless and untenable. I firmly and earnestly believe that I am in possession of truths of the deepest importance to humanity, and that I am working for the establishment of a higher, nobler, and purer society than any yet contemplated upon earth. In this belief I may be mistaken, but I conceive it to be correct, and, therefore, I feel myself justified in acting upon it. I don't think the theory of Christianity is historically justifiable; and if it is not true, I cannot do other than endeavour to point out its untenability to others. You, I take it for granted, have equally investigated these subjects, and have been led to form a different opinion. We must, therefore, necessarily work one against the other in these particulars. I repeat that, so far as I am concerned, such a difference of abstract aim forms no barrier to social intercourse, but I fully recognise that, in your case, the opposite conclusion may be obligatory. I quite feel that I cannot myself associate with certain persons whose principles and actions seem to me debasing and degrading, and that I do some violence to my sympathies by even associating with those who appear to me to be enemies of human progress and moral order. I can therefore only respect the motives of your letter, though I regret that any honest and earnest person should feel himself unable to meet me on cordial terms of human fellowship. For myself, I shall regard you in future with the more respect

for the candour and good faith with which you have written to me.—Faithfully yours,

GRANT ALLEN.

The following letter, written to the Rector of Haslemere, falls into line with the foregoing, the occasion being the opposition of that cleric to Allen's nomination as President of the Haslemere Natural History Society:—

July 4, '95.

Dear Sir,—May I venture to address you a few lines of purely personal explanation with regard to the question of the Haslemere Natural History Society? Let me begin by saying that I have not the slightest feeling of resentment towards you for the part which you thought it your duty to take with regard to my election as President. I fully understand that you were actuated by conscientious motives, and that you desired to avoid what seemed to you a scandal in the parish intrusted to you. I hope it is possible for us to differ profoundly in principle without on that account imputing to one another unworthy motives.

All I wish to say is this. I regard our existing system of family and parental arrangements 'as a whole,' comprising these various elements—marriage, prostitution, seduction, abortion, infanticide, desertion, illegitimacy, divorce, and unnatural crimes. I also regard it as being answerable for

much husband-murder, wife-murder, suicide, and misery ; as well as for many terrible diseases and premature deaths, besides inducing (through the effects of prostitution) a great deal of hereditary consumption, cancer, and insanity. Regarding the whole existing system as thus closely bound up together, I feel constrained to call attention to it as far as I can, because I feel that many good women tolerate this 'régime' of vice and immorality simply because they do not recognise and realise its evils. Now I am, of course, aware that to you, who regard the institution of marriage as divinely ordained, any attempt to inquire into its validity must necessarily seem wrong ; but perhaps you can understand that to me, who regard it merely as a human institution, which has grown up slowly like the House of Commons or the system of leaseholds, it is highly desirable that people should be roused to inquire into the working of an arrangement which has so many drawbacks. I have spent many years in a close study of marriage-systems and prostitution-systems, both in East and West ; and having arrived at what I think solid conclusions as to the means by which prostitution, with its attendant diseases and evils, might be wholly avoided, and a perfectly pure system introduced, I cannot refrain from making my ideas public. I believe them to be capable of entirely getting rid of that terrible social evil, as well as of abortion, infanticide, and all the concomitant horrors ; and though in this belief I may, of course, be wholly mistaken, you will, I think, recognise that it is my duty as a good citizen to ventilate ideas which seem to me fraught with so much good for the community. My feeling is that if this thing is not of God, it will come to naught ; but if it is of

God, the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. My sole object is to arouse inquiry and interest; whichever of us is right, surely only good can ultimately arise out of calling attention to this plague-spot in the midst of our civilisation.

Pray do not take the trouble to answer this letter. I merely write it in order to let you see more fully from what point of view and with what objects I approach this question. I understand that you cannot possibly agree with me; I only desire that you should not also misjudge me. Kindly excuse typewriting. I suffer from writer's cramp, and can only use even this machine with my left hand, my right being almost useless.

In the hope that you will pardon me for having troubled you on the subject, and in the full belief that you, like myself, are acting throughout for what you believe to be the highest interests of humanity, I venture to subscribe myself yours  
very faithfully,

GRANT ALLEN.

The temporary lull in the demand for Allen's work had its recompense in giving him opportunity to put into shape some of the materials which he had been long collecting for his book on the Origin of Religions, and also to prepare for press the earlier volumes of his series of Historical Guides. 'Paris' and 'Florence' were published in 1897, and quickly

followed by the 'Cities of Belgium' and 'Venice'; the 'European Tour,' issued when he was on his deathbed, being the last completed volume. All of these contain some of his finest work, and are to be unreservedly commended. They were not written to supersede the ordinary guide-books, but to supplement them, and the plan on which they are constructed shows Allen at his best as an exponent of historical evolution. First comes the inquiry, 'Why a town ever gathered together at all in that particular spot? What induced the aggregation of human beings rather there than elsewhere?' Next, 'Why that town grew to social or political importance, and what were the stages by which it assumed its present shape?' Next, 'Why it gave rise to that higher form of handicraft which we know as Art, and towards what particular arts it specially gravitated?' Finally, the books considered in detail the various strata of the growth or develop-

ment of a town, 'examining the buildings and works of art which they contain in historical order, and, as far as possible, tracing the courses which led to their evolution, stress being laid upon the origin and meaning of each structure as an organic whole, and upon the allusions or symbols which its fabric embodies.'

Allen's endorsement of Mr. Herbert Spencer's theory of ghost-worship—in other words, of the worship of ancestors, as the basis of religion, has been shown in the brief remarks on the 'Attis,' and this attitude was strengthened by further reflection and study, notably of the Bible, his familiarity with which little-read and much misunderstood book was unique. In acknowledging a copy of my Presidential Address to the Folklore Society on the opening of the session in 1896, he wrote:—

The Croft, Haslemere, May 7th.

My dear Clodd,—Thank you so much for your Address. I have read it both with profit and pleasure. Of course, as



usual, we split on the rock of animism, but on that rock we will build our discussion when I am once more under the most hospitable roof of England at Aldeburgh. I am busy just now at my long-delayed big book on religion, which is swelling, I find, to the dimensions of Robertson Smith's 'Religion of the Semites,' or even longer. When it comes out, the rock of animism is going to be ground to powder, like the images of Baal. But of this more anon; a handless man cannot conduct controversy by correspondence. And, indeed, why controvert anything?—In haste, yours ever,

GRANT ALLEN.

Some conversations between Allen and his friends upon the title of the book led to the receipt of this interesting letter from Mr. Spencer, whose wise suggestion was adopted:—

Brighton, 20th Feb. 1897.

My dear Allen,—I have ordered Williams & Norgate to send you a complete set of the 'Descriptive Sociology.' I am not quite sure whether two of the parts are not just now out of print; but if so, they shall be sent as soon as new editions are printed.

Let me beg of you not to use the proposed title for your new book, 'The Evolution of God.' It will be a fatal step.

I remember years ago your having told me that the book you wanted to write, expressive of advanced views, you 'dare not' write because of the disastrous effect which



would result even supposing you could get a publisher. Well, the time came when you mustered courage and wrote 'The Woman who Did.' The book itself has had, I see, a great success in point of numbers of editions; for, doubtless, from what the reviews indicated, great numbers of people out of curiosity wished to see it, and great numbers among them being those who utterly disapproved. But having been widely distributed, there came the reaction.

You ascribe your recent absence of demand for your fiction to the circumstance that you are 'crushed out' by younger men. I take the fact to be, however, that the result you had originally anticipated from writing such a book has occurred, and that the true cause of this lack of demand for your fiction is the effect of 'The Woman who Did.'

Just consider what a large number of fathers and mothers, in a family where the girls get books from the circulating library, would say when they saw a new novel of yours lying on the table, 'What, another book by Grant Allen! Send it back; I won't have any of his stories in the house.' And the local librarian would act upon this result, if, indeed, he did not anticipate it; and, naturally, also editors would look askance at your proposals.

Now, if you adopt the title 'The Evolution of God,' you will produce a kindred effect, even more disastrous. The expression is sufficient to shock not only the orthodox, but no end of people who are extremely liberal in their theology and you would tend by using it still further to diminish your public.

Let me further point out to you that the title is illogical.

You rationally trace the evolution of something you believe in as a reality. But you do not believe in God's reality, and therefore propose to trace the evolution of a thing which, according to you, does not exist. What you mean is 'Evolution of the "Belief in God."' This, though a startling title, is still not a necessarily hostile one, since you may trace the evolution of a true belief as of a false one. It would be quite sufficiently striking without necessarily bringing on you such ruinous results.—Truly yours,

HERBERT SPENCER.

P.S.—Perhaps the title 'Evolution of the "Idea" of God' might be worth considering.

When the manuscript was ready for press, Allen sent it to Mr. Benjamin Kidd, author of 'Social Evolution,' who had evinced interest in the work, and offered to submit it to the consideration of Messrs. Macmillan. This he did, with the result named in the following letter:—

The Croft, Tuesday.

My dear Clodd,—Macmillans won't have my religious book. I enclose a letter from Benjamin Kidd which explains their attitude.

Now . . . I have ventured, without asking your leave beforehand, to tell Macmillans to send it on to you. I am

not going to ask you to 'read' it—Heaven forbid; there are hundreds of pages of it—but perhaps you might at some time manage to run your eye over the chapters and see what it is driving at. There is no hurry about it; the book has waited ten years already, and mankind will no doubt endure to wait ten years more for it. But I should like to know what you think I had better do about it. If you 'could' suggest any publisher likely to take it, I should be duly grateful. I am beginning to get a little disheartened at last. . . . Pardon my bothering you with it, but it is a big book, and has cost me much time and trouble, which I should be sorry to see go to waste for nothing.

Is it not a funny fate which pursues me, that whenever I do a piece of work I particularly like, I can't get a publisher for it? or, if I do, it proves a dead failure. . . .

Nellie joins in love, and I am ever yours very affectionately,

GRANT ALLEN.

The book was ultimately published by Mr. Grant Richards, and an edition of seven hundred and fifty copies disposed of in a few weeks. As the price was twenty shillings net, this result was satisfactory. Mr. Herbert Spencer sent some encouraging words: 'I congratulate you,' he wrote, 'on its achievement. I had no idea you had been devoting such an immensity of labour and

research to the subject. The bringing together of the evidence in a coherent form and showing its bearing on the current creed can scarcely fail to have a great effect. I hope it may succeed as well pecuniarily as it otherwise will.'

Mr. Stead gave ample space to an analysis of the book in the 'Review of Reviews,' receiving the following reply to his inquiry as to suitable illustrations :—

The Croft, Haslemere,  
Oct. 20, '97.

Dear Mr. Stead,—Many thanks for your kind letter. I am very glad to hear that my book has interested you. Of course, I understand how different is our point of view ; but, on the other hand, I can see how much my facts and arguments, a little differently approached, tell in the directions that most interest you. And my evidence that Christianity in all its essentials is far older than the historical Christ (if any) falls in entirely with your own idea that the theological truths are permanent and immanent in humanity. Still, I am relieved to find that you can see this likeness in diversity, and am very much obliged to you for making the book so prominent in the 'Review of Reviews.'

As to the photographs, I am afraid I can be of very little use. There is a woodcut of an Isis and Horus—not a good one—on p. xxii of Mrs. Jameson's 'Legends of the Madonna'

(1891 edition: Longmans) which may be compared with the Byzantine Madonna on p. xxxiv of the same book. But in order to really 'show' the resemblance, one ought to have a late Græco-Egyptian Isis and Horus, such as one sees at Ghizeh, and by its side an early Coptic Christian Madonna and Child from the same collection. I should think the people at the British Museum could help you in this matter; they are almost sure to have photographs or engravings of some such transitional figures. In this remote spot I have access to nothing but my own books, so I am powerless to help you.

With regard to the diagram, it ought to be drawn up with every caution to the reader that its dates are extremely shadowy. Premising this, I would put the epoch of something worth calling Man upon earth at from one to three million years. Accept 1,500,000 as a moderate average, date of earliest human history in Egypt or Akkad, not more than ten thousand years ago. [Allen's estimate of the date when man—as 'homo sapiens'—appeared may or may not be exaggerated, but recent excavations in Chaldæa warrant a much earlier date than ten thousand years for the presence of man, more or less civilised, in that region. For one result of the University of Pennsylvania's Expedition has been the disinterment, on the site of Nippur, of written documents (i.e. cuneiform tablets) proving that the founding of the temple of Bel and the first settlement in Nippur are probably earlier than 7000 B.C.] Rude Stone Age (Palæolithic) probably began two or three million years ago; polished Stone Age (Neolithic) about eighty or a hundred thousand years ago; Bronze Age, about twelve or fifteen thousand years ago; Iron Age, about four thousand years

ago. But make it understood that all these dates are controversial, and that some authorities might even cut down the date of Man on earth to little more than two or three hundred thousand years.

As to Romanism being 'true' Christianity, I used the word (somewhat carelessly, perhaps) from the outsider's point of view, just as you would describe the Turks or Affghans as 'true' Mussulmans, in contradistinction to the Persians or other sectaries. Just so I would distinguish the 'true Kirk of Scotland' from the Free Kirk or the U.P.s. By 'true' I here mean merely central or main ; and, indeed, I was thinking of true Christians as opposed to those modern semi-Christian bodies which are rapidly verging towards a colourless Theism, flavoured by the ethics of the Gospel, and a certain vague respect for the Man Jesus.

Our two points of view are roughly these—'you' think religion grew up thus by some divine fore-ordinance ; 'I' think it grew up by false psychology ; but we can both agree that from the beginning it contained the germs of the end, and that the heathen themselves led up to and anticipated Christianity.—Yours very sincerely,

GRANT ALLEN.

The book did not evoke the discussion which Allen expected. Apart from the indifference (far greater than he thought) about these high matters on the part of a public which in the degree that it cares at all, cares only for settled results, and for



these only when prepared in peptonised form, the facts and inferences did not carry conviction to the upholders of the animistic theory of the Origin of Religions. Hence Allen appears to have abandoned the scheme of developing the argument in further volumes at which he hinted in the Preface. Moreover, he was busy in more remunerative fields. Editors were tempting him with better prices than of yore for stories; and to a generation which had forgotten his science-made-easy articles, it was easy work to recast these as 'Moorland Idylls' and 'Flashlights from Nature.'

But fiction prevailed, because, as he says in a letter from Cookham in the autumn of 1897 to Mr. Charles Longman:—

I don't find it quite so easy as I did to hunt up subjects for scientific articles. I have written about most subjects on which I have anything to say. If a subject occurs to me, I will let you have it; but I have been racking my brains for some weeks to no purpose. I am just going to take a fortnight's holiday at Scarborough, however, and it is possible with rest (and bicycling, of which I am the latest victim) I



may get a fresh fit—or rather, a fit of freshness—and ex-cogitate something.—Yours sincerely and penitently,

GRANT ALLEN.

His keen and growing interest in art, mainly as illustrative of evolution in the conceptions which material and spiritual conditions determined, made the preparation of the 'Historical Guides' a labour of love, and a warrant for holidays abroad. The series, which secured the flattery of imitation, remains unfinished. It is, therefore, the more refreshing to record that on one side of Allen's work a certain completeness was reached, and that in a direction which brought him pleasure unalloyed. This was in the contribution of an Introduction and Notes to a book of which above eighty editions have already appeared — 'The Natural History of Selborne.' Dealing with a work 'which must be read in the historic, and not in the strictly scientific spirit,' Allen is sparing in the matter of notes, contenting himself, in the main, with

correcting questionable or erroneous statements in the text. In the Introduction he contrasts the more limited and simpler conditions under which the old naturalists worked with those enjoyed by their successors of to-day. But the history of scientific progress shows, as, for example, in the case of Galileo's discoveries, that genius and insight have achieved marvellous results with the simplest apparatus; and even where the obscure collector has gathered materials whose value he knew not, these have often formed the basis of the superstructures which the master-builders in science have raised. In recording the natural history and antiquities of Selborne and its neighbourhood Gilbert White started with no 'a priori' theories, still less with the intention of writing a book. He troubled not himself about the origin of life-forms; that all plants and animals were specially created by divine fiat was no matter of question with the parson-

naturalist. The science of comparative mythology, with its proofs of the derivation of the Hebrew legend of the Creation from Accadian sources, was unborn; and the disturbing doubts as to the permanence of species which Buffon had covertly expressed, reached not the unruffled life of a Hampshire village. Nevertheless, the things that Gilbert White observed suggested reflections which, had they been pursued, would have brought him face to face with problems whose solution it was left for Spencer, Darwin, and Wallace to achieve. Allen gives a few cogent examples of the old naturalist's unwitting approach towards certain sides of the theory of natural selection and of the allied theory of subtle interaction between organisms and their surroundings. 'He was one of the few early naturalists who recognised the importance of the cumulative effect of infinitesimal factors—a truth on which almost the whole of modern biology and

geology are built up. As zoologist, as botanist, as meteorologist, as sociologist, he is possessed in anticipation by the modern spirit in every direction. In this respect, it is true, he cannot be named beside his far abler contemporary, Erasmus Darwin; yet while Erasmus Darwin has left behind him great speculations, immensely interesting to the student of science and philosophy, but not to the general reader, Gilbert White has produced a book which will continue to be read for years, both as a model of observation and as the picture of a man, a place, and an epoch' (p. xxxviii).

Two graphic letters to his son, describing the excitement in Northern Italy during the riots of 1898, at the time when Allen was setting out homeward, may be inserted here:—

Hôtel de l'Europe,  
Milan, Sunday.

Dearest old Man,—The riots here began on Friday. But we heard nothing of them at Venice, and left there yesterday morning in blissful ignorance. Arriving here, we found great

crowds in the streets, and were driven up by unfamiliar ways ; shops all shut ; no carriages. We soon learnt that a barricade had been erected in this very street, and that the military had only carried it a few minutes before our arrival. As mother had been ordered perfect rest and no agitation, this was not very good for her. All the afternoon, crowds formed, and the soldiers patrolled : tramp, tramp, tramp, with occasional dashes of cavalry. Having a front room with a balcony, we could see everything. At eleven at night, a state of siege was proclaimed, and the streets cleared, but ineffectually. All the night through we slept little, hearing the tramping and galloping of soldiers, and getting up every now and then to see if anything was happening. This morning, I proposed to mother to go on to Generoso, but she is so very tired that, in spite of the state of siege, she prefers to rest here. To-morrow, if nothing unforeseen occurs, we will start early, and go for a week to the Hôtel Generoso-Kulm, Canton Ticino, Switzerland. You will have seen all the main facts of the row in the papers (sooner than we know them here), but I mention them just as showing how they affected us personally.

Dear mother has had a serious breakdown in Venice, and must be kept quiet and taken care of for months. I too have over-worked myself and given way, and must rest for some time. We will therefore probably not be home much before the first of June. We don't anticipate any difficulty in getting away from here to-morrow.

Milan and all Italy are in a revolutionary mood. It will not surprise me to find a Republic proclaimed in the next three days or so. Milan gives the keynote, as the richest and

most industrial town in Italy. Rome only follows.—In haste,  
your loving,  
DADS.

Lugano, Sunday, 5 p.m.

After writing the above (about 10 this morning) at Milan, mother and I went out into the Cathedral square, meaning to go into the Gallery. We found the place cut off by cordons of soldiers, and as mother had by that time walked as far as she ought, I took her back to the Europa. Then I went out myself, but found cordons of soldiers blocking every way, except for people going to the station. When I got back to the Europa, they advised us to leave, saying if we did not get away to-day, there was no knowing when we might do so. So we packed at ten minutes' notice, and caught the 12.30 northward, without lunch. We arrived at Lugano at three, or a little after, and drove to the Splendide in the Splendide 'bus, the conductor having assured us that there was plenty of room. When we got there, not a bed vacant. They sent us on to the Parc, where the people showed us a room in a distant dependance, without 'salle à manger,' and where mother would have had to walk a great distance uphill after each meal. We were worn out by this time, and wished ourselves back in the peace and comfort of revolutionary Milan. Lugano was choke full. At last I found a room here in a little German hotel called the Metropole, and to-morrow we propose, if we are well enough, to go up to Monte Generoso. But we are very weak and ill, and not sure whether we can get rooms there. As to letters, I think I will telegraph where to send them. Just at present, we are very sorry for ourselves, and a little down-hearted. We are in a



cheerless place, alone, just when we need comfort and good cooking.

This is a grumbling letter, but you know how one feels when one is ill and tired, and the fates persistently go against one. United love.—Ever your own affectionate

DADS.

The latter half of 1898 found Allen full of commissions for work both grave and gay, and at the turn of the year he renewed his rounds in the art galleries of Italy. The rest may be briefly told. During a stay in Venice in the early spring of 1899, he was attacked with what appeared to be malarial symptoms, but the exact nature of which, on his return home, puzzled a succession of specialists. His condition, despite intermittent gleams of hope, shared by him to the full, became, week after week, more grave; and in the final stages of the malady, which an autopsy proved was deep-seated and incurable, he endured frightful agony, from which, on the 25th October, death brought release. The suffering he underwent was a cruel sequel to a life which



never consciously gave pain to any living creature, and to whose exquisitely sensitive temperament pain, not death, was the 'king of terrors.' Watching a moth in a candle flame, he asked,

Why should a sob  
For the vaguest smart  
One moment throb  
Through the tiniest heart?

Stevenson's merciless treatment of Modestine, pricked with goad armed with an inch of pin, and with her foreleg 'no better than raw beef on the inside,' which is described in the 'Travels with a Donkey,' evoked a protest from Allen; while in his article on 'The New Hedonism' ('Fortnightly Review,' 1894) he tells this story:—

'I saw once at the Zoo a pair of chimpanzees, the female of which was dying of consumption. When the keeper opened the box where the two were kept, the little husband clasped his sick wife to his breast with such a pathetic look of mingled terror

and protective feeling, that I said at once, "Shut down the lid." I could not bear to intrude upon this almost human sorrow' (p. 387).

His feeling about death has explanation in a remarkable article contributed to the 'Pall Mall Gazette' some seven years ago, in which he describes a narrow escape from drowning in boyhood. He was skating on a lake from which big blocks of ice had been cut the day before, and, unaware of this, went swiftly towards the dangerous spot, which had been only slightly frozen over during the night. He went through, and was carried under the thicker ice beyond, which, on coming to the surface, he tried to break through by butting his head against it. The result was that he was stunned, then numbed by the cold, and water-logged, so that, but for timely help, he must have succumbed. So far as consciousness went, he was dead: artificial respiration and restoratives brought

him back to life. And, in his own words, 'the knowledge that I have thus once experienced in my own person exactly what death is, and tried it fully, has had a great deal to do, I think, with my utter physical indifference to it. I "know" how it feels; and, though it is momentarily uncomfortable (I felt only a sense of cold and damp and breathlessness, a fierce wild struggle, a horrible choking sensation, and then all was over), it isn't half as bad as breaking your arm or having a tooth drawn. In fact, the actual dying itself, as dying, is quite painless—as painless as falling asleep. It is only the previous struggle, the sense of its approach, that is at all uncomfortable. Even this is much less unpleasant than I should have expected beforehand; and I noted at the time that there was a total absence of any craven shrinking—the sensation was a mere physical one of gasping and choking. Whenever I have stood within a measurable distance of death ever since,

my feeling has been always the same—I have been there already, and see no cause to dread it. Of course, one might strongly object to a painful end, on account of its painfulness, and one might shrink, and ought to shrink, from leaving one's family—especially if young or insufficiently provided for; but death itself, it seems to me, need have absolutely no terrors for a sensible person.'

In Allen's case, absence of dread of death was accompanied by absence of belief in a future life. This was the logical outcome, not so much of denial, as of what would seem congenital incapacity to conceive that there could be such a thing as the supernatural. In a letter to the 'Echo,' on one of the rare occasions that he troubled to correct mis-statements about himself, he said, 'I am not, and never was, an Agnostic.' For the Agnostic, in refusing either to affirm or deny as to the existence of anything beyond the phenomenal and outside the

range of human experience or of possible knowledge, recognises that it may be. But he expends no time upon it, holding with Bacon that 'The inquisition of Final Causes is barren, and, like a virgin consecrated to God, produces nothing.' He says, 'I don't know.' Allen, on the contrary, said, 'There is nothing to be known.'

Obviously, there was nothing of the mystic or the transcendentalist (using that term in its Kantian sense) in his mental composition. As an example, in his treatment of Celtic folklore, although the magic of the poetry attracted him, as it attracts us all, he threw the cold, dry light of analysis on the fairydom in endeavouring to prove that the romance of the 'little folk' is a confused tradition of a dwarf race, whose nearest representatives are, perhaps, the modern Lapps. And further, his 'reaction against the despotism of fact' in the crusade against the institution of marriage was largely affected by undue insistence upon one set

of facts to the minimising or excluding of others.

To apply to him what Cotter Morison said of Macaulay, that 'he had no ear for the finer harmonies of the inner life,' does not quite convey what one intends; and yet Allen himself would not have taken exception to it. For, again and again, in private chat, he spoke of never having felt awe or reverence in contemplating phenomena that move the multitude of mankind to sacrifice or prayer. He had a full share of the wonder which accompanies boundless curiosity. This was not, however, because he felt himself in the presence of an inscrutable Power, but because what he had learned concerning the interaction and interrelation of things spurred him to more eager effort to discover secrets which would bring further revelation of the unbroken unity of phenomena. This was all that he cared about. And he deemed it a puerile and unworthy thing to use time in discussing

the validity of a heap of trivial pseudo-mysteries loosely grouped under the term 'supernatural,' when the natural held unexplained matters weighty enough to occupy the life of a man, were it lengthened an hundredfold. For within a man's very self, to name but one or two of the matters upon which Allen was wont to dilate, lie hid the problems of heredity, with its involved transmission of physical characters and mental tendencies, from generation to generation, through the medium of a speck of matter invisible to the naked eye; the mysterious processes of digestion, since 'man is what he eats'; and, still more mysterious, those of assimilation, so that in the change of particles, which the nerve-cells ceaselessly undergo, the continuity of the individual abides.

Whether in the dissection of a simple flower or of an elaborated creed, Allen, as a consistent evolutionist, applied the same method. The critical coolness which he



brought to analysis of things held dear and sacred was not due to wantonness, nor to disregard of susceptibilities, but to the unshakable conviction that the methods of science are universal in their application. Hence things possessed for him a reality which made him scarcely tolerant of the 'muzzy' philosophies wherewith men confuse themselves and their fellows. There may be aptly applied to him what Mr. Mackail eloquently says of Lucretius: 'His contemplation of existence is no brooding over abstractions: Nature is not in his view the majestic and silent figure before whose unchanging eyes the shifting shadow-shapes go and come; but an essential life, manifesting itself in a million workings, "*creatrix, gubernans, daedala rerum.*" The universe is filled through all its illimitable spaces by the roar of her working, the ceaseless, unexhausted energy with which she alternates life and death' ('Latin Literature,' p. 77).

And in face of the gross, often revolting,

conceptions of deity which prevail among the mass of mankind, civilised as well as uncivilised, giving warrant to the taunt that 'the best excuse for God is that He does not exist,' Allen's lofty 'prayer' will have echo in hearts rebellious as his own :—

A crowned Caprice is god of this world ;  
On his stony breast are his white wings furred.  
No ear to listen, no eye to see,  
No heart to feel for a man hath he.

But his pitiless arm is swift to smite :  
And his mute lips utter one word of might,  
'Mid the clash of gentler souls and rougher,  
Wrong must thou do, or wrong must suffer.'

Then grant, O dumb, blind god, at least that we  
Rather the sufferers than the doers be.

If the possession of any 'religion' be accorded to a man who, in words full of awful import to the orthodox, lived without 'hope, and without God in the world,' it must be only as a fundamental part of his ethics. Mr. Andrew Lang says that Allen was 'the one man he knew' who, in a certain crisis,

'acted like a Christian.' That is, he was true to himself, and therefore, not false to others, since all noble acts lie outside the creeds; and the assumption that the impulse to these acts is a monopoly of Christianity has no warrant either in past or present history. The energies that men apply, or misapply, to the salvation of their souls and the souls of their fellows in 'a world of doubtful future date,' men of Allen's type apply to the remedying of ills in the actual and the present; to the delivery of the mind from the illusory fears which render it 'all its lifetime subject to bondage.' One of the mottoes which Montaigne inscribed on the rafters of his tower was, 'It is not so much things that torment man, as the opinion he has of things,' and Allen was ever strenuous in effort to redeem others from the slavery of conventional acquiescence.

But the outlook of these latter days chilled his generous enthusiasm. Talks that passed between us (Mr. Le Gallienne makes refer-

ence to the like in the opening pages of his article) took written shape in a letter to Mr. Herbert Spencer, who replies under date of 19th July 1898: 'Your views as to the present aspect of the world are exactly my views, and you have expressed them in a completely parallel way. Two days ago, in answer to a letter of Moncure Conway, similarly expressing dread of the future and urging that I should take part in an effort to form a kind of supreme court of select men to pass opinions on international relations, I said just as you say, that we are in course of rebarbarisation, and that there is no prospect but that of military despotisms, which we are rapidly approaching.'

And a man has, indeed, no small need of faith at a time when all liberal movements have been swept by boisterous currents into a backwater. The spectacle is a strange one for those who are old enough to remember the advances of a past generation in matters political, social, intellectual, and theological.

This modern spirit, named Imperialism, which sees its justification and immediate fruitage in a material prosperity and ever-broadening area, has become impatient of restraint, and, heedless of the lessons taught by vanished empires, brushes aside as transcendental and dreamy stuff the ideals whose fulfilment depend not on the multitude of things which a nation possesses. It is deaf to the fact that civilisation has largely come to mean the creation of a heap of artificial wants, with resulting discontent because those wants cannot be gratified. Where there is not impatience at restraint, there is indifference about the deep matters of social and other reforms, in the presence of which a man can only 'possess his soul in patience' and nurse the hope that the spirit of aggressiveness and greed which now runs riot may yield to a genuine Imperialism that shall make for the general peace and well-being of the world.

Meantime, in the unhappy bandying about

of the name 'Christian,' let the thoughtful ponder who most 'acts like' one—the man who echoes the 'patriotic' songs of the music-hall, or the man who replies, as Allen did, to a request that he would contribute an article on the defence of the Dominion to the Canadian Year Book (1898):—

You can know very little of my aims and ideals if you think I would willingly do anything to help on a work whose avowed object is to arouse 'military enthusiasm.' Military enthusiasm means enthusiasm for killing people. My desire in life has been not to kill, but to help and aid all mankind, irrespective of nationality, creed, language, or colour. I hate war, and everything that leads to it, as I hate murder, rapine, or the ill-treatment of women. I dislike slavery, however cloaked under the disguise of 'Imperialism.' I contribute gladly to works designed to strengthen the bonds of amity between nations and to render war impossible, but I cannot contribute to one which aims at making peaceable Canadian citizens throw themselves into the devouring whirlpool of militarism.

The abolition of war is probably only more remote than the abolition of legal marriage, but protests against what Burke calls 'the thriving sophisms of barbarous

national pride, and the eternal fallacies of war and conquest,' have their uses in curbing passions inherent in human nature. Allen's views about militarism are involved in his hatred of wrong-doing and his sympathy with suffering, and in a world whose institutions rest, in the last resort, on force, he was a 'pilgrim and a stranger.' If he often expressed his views with unpalatable plainness, it was because the attention of the multitude can be aroused only through force of presentment.

Careful to observe by virtue of an inborn gentleness the courtesies of life, there was, nevertheless, no 'hedging' of opinion to accommodate himself to his company. For example, he agreed with George III. (it was certainly the only thing in which he did agree with that monarch) that a good deal of Shakespeare was 'sad stuff'—Darwin, it may be remembered, found it 'intolerably dull,'—and, in general, Allen was consistent in maintaining that the writers of the



Elizabethan age are not to be compared to those of our era. Free from the vanities, narrownesses, and petty jealousies which often accompany the literary temper, he was generous to a fault in his assessment of the work of his contemporaries, and this, consequently, to the occasional impairment of his judgement. 'They say,' he wrote jocosely to Mr. Longman, 'that I discover a new poet once a fortnight. If so, I must have begun six weeks ago, for my discoveries up to date are Watson, Davidson, Le Gallienne, and, to tell you the truth, I am not in the least ashamed of them.' He encloses a poem by a new writer in whom he sees promise, and this was the sort of thing he was constantly doing for his fellow-craftsmen. His own struggles, never hardening the heart, begot sympathy with theirs.

The happiness of his domestic relations has been touched upon, and perhaps enough has been indicated, both in the personal

tributes and correspondence printed in this memoir, as to the affection which he inspired and the delight which his comradeship afforded. But my own intimate relations with Allen for well-nigh twenty years is warrant for adding that a more lovable, considerate, true, and sympathetic friend there could not be, while it would be hard to find his equal as a suggestive and inspiring companion, the catholicity of whose tastes and the breadth of whose knowledge, touched by enthusiasm ever to know more, made his society a perennial delight. The man was greater than his books. His talk was, as Lewes says of Plato's dialogues, full of 'speculative yeast.' For whether he dissected a flower or described a picture, or unravelled an etymology; whether he analysed an individual character, or a race-temperament; or whether he expounded theories of origins, from origin of sex to origin of belief in spiritual beings, he was as suggestive as

he was illuminative and instructive. Touched by enthusiasm ever to know more of a universe and its contents which begot in him no feeling of reverence, but which fed his sense of wonder—such was Allen: always learning. To quote from Mr. Frederic Harrison's address delivered at Woking, when 'the body was committed to the purifying action of fire'; 'no disease, no exhaustion of body or brain, no care or anxiety, no distraction from the visible world without, could stifle his intense eagerness of mind to follow out his ideas, to complete his observations, to push on the work in hand. Few men had a more frail and suffering bodily frame. Not many men have had more pressing cares and obstacles. Few living men have undertaken so bewildering a range of studies—ever had, to use a homely expression, so many irons in the fire—irons, be it said, of strange incongruity and divergence. A man, too, of intense sensitiveness to the

acts and thoughts of those around him, a man of extraordinary sensibility to the charms of Art and Nature—a mind peculiarly responsive to the most subtle suggestions of any word, or book, or person, or flower, or creature that might cross his path.'

His eagerness to be ever learning was equalled only by his willingness to impart all that he knew. The companions of his rambles will remember how, when his eye rested on some plant that held a lesson in evolution in its leaves or petals, he would pluck it, stand still, and make it the text of a delightful sermon. And, as the following letter shows, his busy pen would set aside its task to answer a question about things which he never wearied of expounding:—

The Croft, Hind Head, Haslemere,  
Sat. (13th April 1895).

My dear Miss Cox,—No ; your plant is 'not' a cryptogam, and its resemblance to a fern is purely external. It is an asparagus, and the apparent leaves or leaflets are really

branches. There are few or no true leaves; and the few there are take the reduced form of scales. A true fern has no stem to speak of, and each frond comes up spirally coiled—has, as we say, a circinate vernation. If you watch common asparagus growing (and now is the time to do it), you will see, on the contrary, that it sends up a stout true stem, with scale-like leaves, and that the branches divide and become very numerous, mostly leafless, but function-like leaves, as in gorse and broom. A few true leaves or bracts, however, occur on the peduncles of the flowers. In flower, berry, etc., the asparagus is just an ordinary lily. Garden asparagus produces its branches evenly all round, like a spruce-fir; this climbing kind produces them flattened out laterally against a wall, like so many creepers, such as ivy or Virginia creeper. It is this one-sided and flattened arrangement of the branches that makes the plant look at first sight like a fern or lycopodium.

The article, with which you so kindly assisted me, has long been accepted by Knowles for the 'Nineteenth Century,' but I don't know why he is holding it over from month to month. I have another on hand about which I shall venture (after that one appears) to ask if you will give me once more the benefit of your wide reading. In haste.—Yours very sincerely, GRANT ALLEN.

(The reference here is to a still unpublished paper on 'The Last Trump.')

Naturalist, anthropologist, physicist, historian, poet, novelist, essayist, critic—what

place is to be assigned to this versatile, well-equipped worker? Time, whose perspective is necessary for the assignment of his place to every man, will alone determine what, if any, of Allen's writings will survive. One thing is sure, that whether a man apply himself to a single subject, or to many subjects, the bulk of what he writes, sufficing for the day, survives not beyond the day. They are among the wise, therefore, who content themselves with the reflection that mayhap something here and there dropped from their pens may filter through the minds of their fellows for entertainment or for profit.

Save for the few Immortals, man has short memory of his fellows. A line or two of record is the most that the multitude of those who, 'having served their generation, fell on sleep,' may reckon upon, if they care to reckon at all. For surely, in the approval and sympathy of contemporaries there is sufficing stimulus

to honest work, and it should content a man if those who knew him well hold remembrance of him dear. Such remembrance has Grant Allen in the circle of friends wherein his death has made so large a gap—friends to whose lips there rises the lament of old:—

‘ They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead ;  
They brought me bitter news to hear, and bitter tears to shed ;  
I wept as I remembered how often you and I  
Had tired the sun with talking, and sent him down the sky.

And now that thou art lying, my dear old Carian guest,  
A handful of grey ashes, laid long ago at rest,  
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake ;  
For Death, he taketh all away, but these he cannot take.’



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